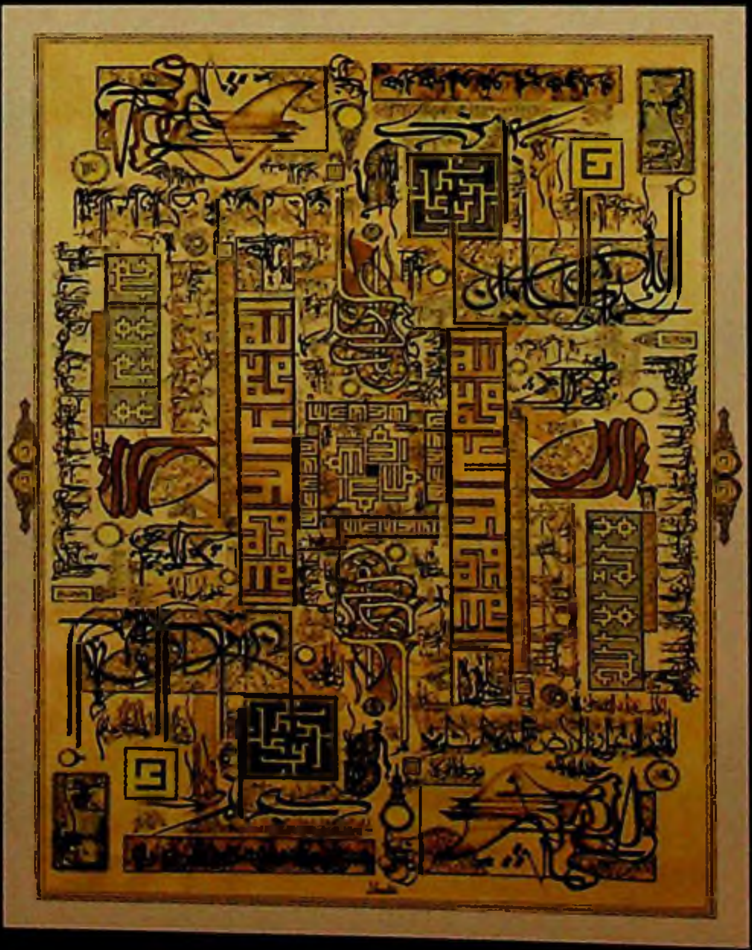
Sufism ('Irfan)



Seyed Ghahreman Safavi

Sufism (‘Irfan)

Edited by Seyed Ghahreman Safavi
London Academy of Iranian Studies

Copyright © 2009 by Seyed Ghahreman Safavi.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2008909387
ISBN: Hardcover 978-1-4363-7912-0
Softcover 978-1-4363-7911-3

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

This book was printed in the United States of America.

Published in 2008 by London Academy of Iranian Studies Press.

www.iranianstudies.org

philosophy@iranianstudies.org

To order additional copies of this book, contact:
Xlibris Corporation
1-888-795-4274
www.Xlibris.com
Orders@Xlibris.com
49874

Contents

Chapter One
Theoretical and Practical Sufism

1- Theoretical Gnosis and Doctrinal Sufism and Their Significance Today 15
Seyyed Hossein Nasr
George Washington University

2- The Practice of Mysticism ('irfān-i 'amalī) in Islam 35
Seyed Ghahreman Safavi,
SOAS, University of London

Chapter Two
Sufism and Shi'ism

3- Shi'ism and Sufism: their Relationship in Essence and in History 63
Seyyed Hossein Nasr
George Washington University, USA.

4- Shi'ism, Sufism and Gnosticism (*'Irfan*) 75
Hajj Nor `Ali Tabandeh, Majdhub `Alishah

Chapter Three
Fundations of Sufism

5- The Reality of Gnosis *('Irfan)* 85
Muhsin Araki,
Islamic Centre of England, UK

6- The Place of Mysticism within the Hierarchy of Islamic Sciences 100
Muhsin Araki,
Islamic Centre of England, UK

7- Love in 'Irfān 106
Muhsin Araki,
Islamic Centre of England, UK

8- On the Four Journeys (*Risālat taḥqīq fī l-Asfār al-Arba'a*) 117
Abul-Hasan Rafi'i Qazwini (d. 1975)
Trans./annot. Sayyid Sajjad Rizvi, University of Exeter, UK

Chapter Four

The Epistemology of Mystics

9- The Epistemology of the Mystics (Part One) 127
Sayyed Yahya Yasrebi,
Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran

10- The Epistemology of the Mystics (Part Two) 144
Sayyed Yahya Yasrebi,
Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran

11- The Epistemology of the Mystics (Part Three) 151
Sayyed Yahya Yasrebi,
Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran

12- Sufi Knowledge in Mulla Sadra 163
Shahram Pazouki,
Iranian Institute of Philosophy, Iran

13- The Notion and Significance of Ma'rifa in Sufism 173
Reza Shah-Kazemi, IIS-London

Chapter Five
Three Sufi Caracters

14- A Study of Abuhamid Al-Ghazzali's Life and Epistemology 195
Michael Mumisa,
CSIC, The University of Birmingham

15- Ibn Arabi's Psychology in the Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom: A Commentary 214
Laith Sabah Al-Saud,
Purdue University, USA

16- The Presence of Worship in Ibn Arabi's Ontology and Theology 231
Laith Sabah Al-Saud,
Purdue University, USA

17- Rumi's Life at a Glance 243
Mahvasholsadat Alavi
London Academy of Iranian Studies, UK

Chapter Six
Comparative Mysticism

18- Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī on Love 267
Salman Bashier,
University of Utah, USA

19- Satori, Enlightenment and *'Irfan*: A Reflection on the Question of Individual Realization 285
Seyed Javad Miri
University of Bristol, UK

20- Spiritual Ascent in Buddhism, Christianity and Islam: A Study In Comparative Mysticism 299
Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu
International Islamic University Malaysia

21- A Selected Bibliography of ‘Irfan/Sufism. 319
Seyed Sadreddin Safavi
SOAS, University of London

Endnotes 355
Index 401

Dedicated to my ancestor Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardebili and Shah N'imat Allah Wali.

Preface

Sufism is the Essence and the esoteric dimension of Islam, which enables the Human being to reach the stage of union with Allah, and hence reach perfection. Doctrinal Sufism or theoretical gnosis, which is refrred to as *al-tasawwuf al-'ilmī* in Arabic, is dominated by the two basic doctrines of the "transcendent oneness of Being" (*wahdat al-wujud*) and the perfect man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) which includes not only a gnostic anthropology but also a symbolic cosmology on the basis of the correspondence between the microcosm and macrocosm. Sufism is concerned not only with the practical aspects of religion, but also with basic Islamic doctrines such as creation, prophecy, eschatology, etc. Of all the Islamic tenets and teachings, the one that is exclusively devoted to the basic issue of the manner and quality of man's spiritual conduct, his fight against carnal desires, his attainment of union with the Lord, whereby he ceases to exist independently but continues his existence in Him, is 'Irfan or Sufism.

Mystic knowledge, as a thorough cultural system that pertains to man's spiritual life, has its theoretical base in an unimpeachable belief in the fact that the most perfect way to receive the essence and the truth of existence is through intuitive knowledge and perception, the unification of reason with the reasoned and the reasonable, love with lover and the beloved. From the practical point of view, it is based on the performance of lawful ascetic practices, purification of the ego or soul, vigilance, reckoning of the self, the saying of prayers and passing beyond the surface and the superfluities of worldly affair and in the utmost attachment to the truths of all matters relating to body and soul.

Sufism or *'Irfān* (mysticism) is both theoretical and practical. The theoretical undertakes the elaboration and interpretation of God, the world and the man from a mystical viewpoint. It provides mystical answers to the three essential questions of life, namely the whence, wherefore and whither.

Practical mysticism is also called wayfaring or peripatetic journeying and sets forth the realisations and duties of man with himself, with the world and with God. It denotes what a *sālik* or wayfarer's initial conduct and its terminal points must be in order to become a Perfect Man (*insān-i kāmil*) and successor of God on earth and reach the highest position that is possible for man to attain. That exalted human status is the dissolution (*fanā*) of his being in God and his subsistence (*baqā*) by His will to eternal life. It describes a Sufi's duties of conduct, his means, his states and the experience he goes through on his way to join the Lord. Ways to purge the self, to combat the ego and purify the soul are also included among these practices. Thus *'irfān* is descried as an intuitive knowledge of God that leads man to His resence and to the ultimate goal, which is to witness and be in with God (*liqā'Allāh*).

In the modern age due to the spiritual void felt in society many from the east and west, have become wayfarers on the path to the beloved Allah, in search of meaning and tranquility. there is a need in the west for genuine presentation of Sufism from both a theoretical and practical aspect, this book through using western research methodology and using primary Islamic sources offers a comprehensive portrait of Sufism, and covers themes such as Theoretical and Practical Sufism, Sufism and Shiism, Foundations of Sufism, The Epistemology of Mystics, Some Sufi Characters (Ghazali, Ibn Arabi and Rumi) and Comparative Mysticism.

This book is a selection of articles the majority of which have been previously published in the Transcendent Philosophy Journal.

It is necessary to thank the writers of these articles: Prof Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Georg Washington University, USA, Dr. Hajj Nor `Ali Tabandeh, Majdhub `Alishah, Ayatollah Muhsin Araki, Islamic Centre of England, UK, Dr Seyyed Yahya Yasrabi, Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran, Dr Sajjad Rizvi, University of Exeter, UK, Dr Michael Mumisa¸CSIC, The University of Birmingham, Laith Sabah Al-Saud, Purdue University, USA, Dr Salamn Bashier, University of Utah, USA, Dr Shahram Pazouki, Iranian Institute of Philosophy, Dr Mahvashossadat Alavi, LAIS, UK, Dr Seyed Javad Miri, University of Bristol, UK, Dr Reza Shah Kazemi, The Institute of Ismaili Studies, UK, and Seyed Sadreddin Safavi, SOAS, University of London.

Seyed G Safavi
London Academy of Iranian Studies

Chapter One

Theoretical Gnosis and Doctrinal Sufism and Their Significance Today

Seyyed Hossein Nasr
George Washington University

Abstract

This essay examines the meaning, role and structure of that supreme science of the Real which came to be known as al-tasawwuf al-'ilmi or 'irfan-i nazari in Islamic civilization. It then turns to the history of this science beginning with Ibn 'Arabi and his immediate circle and then considers each region of the Islamic world separately from Morocco to the Malay world. Special attention is paid to the great masters of 'irfan-i nazari in Persia from the earliest teachers to those of the present day. The relation of this science to philosophy, kalam, and other intellectual disciplines is discussed and its spiritual significance is studied in itself and in its relation to the operative and practical aspects of Sufism. At the end of the essay a section is devoted to the significance of 'irfan today and its role in providing solutions for some of the most important intellectual and spiritual issues facing the contemporary Islam world.

Introduction

There is a body of knowledge in the Islamic tradition which, while highly intellectual in the original sense of this term, is neither theology (*kalām*) nor philosophy (*falsafah*) while dealing with many subjects of their concern although from another perspective. This body of knowledge is called doctrinal Sufism, *al-taṣawwuf al-'ilmī* in Arabic, to be contrasted to practical Sufism, *al-taṣawwuf al-'amalī*, or theoretical (and sometimes speculative) gnosis (this term being understood in its original and not sectarian sense), especially in the Persian-speaking world, where it is referred to as *'irfān-ī naẓarī*. The seekers and masters of this body of knowledge have always considered it to be the Supreme Science, *al-'ilm al-a'lā*, and it corresponds

in the Islamic context to what we have called elsewhere *scientia sacra*.[1] This corpus of knowledge is implicit in the Quran, *Ḥadīth*, and the writings of early Sufis. It becomes somewhat more explicit from the 4th/10th century onward in works of such masters as Hakīm Tirmidhī, Abū Hāmid Muhammad and Aḥmad Ghazzālī, and 'Ayn al-Qudāt Hamadānī and receives its full elaboration in the 7th/13th century in the hands of Ibn 'Arabī, not all of whose writings are, however, concerned with this Supreme Science. This corpus is distinct from other genres of Sufi writing such as manuals for the practice of Sufism, works on spiritual virtues, Sufi hagiographies, Sufi poetry, etc. but during the past seven centuries this body of knowledge has exercised great influence on most other aspects of Sufism and also on later Islamic philosophy and even *kalām*.

Despite its immense influence in many parts of the Islamic world during the last centuries, doctrinal Sufism or theoretical gnosis has also had its opponents over the centuries, including certain scholars of the Quran and *Ḥadīth*, some of the more exoterist jurists, many of the theologians (*mutakallimūn*), some of the more rationalistic philosophers and even some Sufis associated with Sufi centers (*khānqāh* or *zāwiyah*) and established orders. The latter have opposed the theoretical exposition of truths which they believe should be kept hidden and which they consider to be associated closely with spiritual practice and inward unveiling (*kashf*).[2] Still, this body of knowledge has been preserved and has continued to flourish over all these centuries, exercising immense influence in many domains of Islamic thought while remaining for many the crown of all knowledge.

A Brief History of the Tradition of Theoretical Gnosis

The Earliest Foundation

Before turning to theoretical gnosis itself and its significance today, it is necessary to provide a brief history over the ages in the Islamic tradition of the expressions of this Supreme Science which itself stands beyond history and temporal development, being at the heart of the *philosohia perennis* as understood by traditional authorities,[3] and not being bound in its essence by the local coloring of various epochs and places. Of course, the wisdom with which this Supreme Science deals has always been and will always be, but it has received distinct formulations in the framework of various traditions at whose heart is to be found this wisdom concerning the nature of reality. In the Islamic tradition this knowledge was handed down in a principial manner by the Prophet to a number of his companions, chief among them 'Alī, and in later generations to the Sufi masters and of course the Shi'ite

Imams, many of whom were in fact also poles of Sufism of their day.[4] Besides being transmitted orally, this knowledge was often expressed in the form of allusions, elliptical expressions, symbolic poems and the like.

Gradually from the 4th/10th century onward some Sufis such as akīm Abū 'Abd Allāh Tirmidhī (d. circa 320/938) began to write more systematically on certain aspects of Sufi doctrine. For example, Tirmidhī wrote on the central Sufi doctrine of *walāyah/wilāyah*, that is, initiatic and spiritual power as well as sanctity. During the century after him, Abū āmid Muhammad Ghazzālī (d. 505/1111) wrote on divine knowledge itself in both the *Iḥyā'* and such shorter treatises as *al-Risālat al-laduniyyah* (only attributed to him according to some scholars) as well as writing an esoteric commentary on the Light Verse of the Quran in his *Mishkāt al-anwār*. His brother Aḥmad (d. 520/1126) expounded gnosis and metaphysics in the language of love in his *Sawāniḥ*. Shortly afterwards, 'Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadānī (d. 525/1131) dealt with the subject of divine knowledge and a philosophical exposition of certain Sufi teachings in his *Maktūbāt* and *Tamhīdāt* while in his *Zubdah* he criticized the existing rationalistic currents in the thought of some philosophers and pointed to another way of knowing which is none other than gnosis. These figures in turn prepared the ground for Ibn 'Arabī, although he is a colossal and providential figure whose writings cannot be reduced to simply historical influences of his predecessors.[5]

Many have quite rightly considered Ibn 'Arabī as the father of theoretical gnosis or doctrinal Sufism.[6] His writings as already mentioned are not, however, concerned only with pure metaphysics and gnosis. They also deal extensively with Quranic and *Ḥadīth* commentary, the meaning of religious rites, various traditional sciences including the science of the symbolic significance of letters of the Arabic alphabet, ethics, law and many other matters, including poetry, all of which also are of an esoteric and gnostic nature. As far as the subject of this essay is concerned, it will be confined to works devoted completely to theoretical gnosis and metaphysics, works which deal directly with the Supreme Science of the Real. Otherwise, every work of Ibn 'Arabī and his School is related in one way or another to gnosis or *ma'rifah* as are writings of many other Sufis. The seminal work of Ibn 'Arabī on the subject of gnosis and one which is foundational to the whole tradition of theoretical gnosis in Islam is the *Fusūs al-Hikam* ("Bezels of Wisdom")[7] along with certain sections of his magnum opus *al-Futūhāt al-makkiyyah*, ("The Meccan Illuminations),[8] and a few of his shorter treatises including *Naqsh al-Fusūs* which is Ibn 'Arabī's own commentary upon the *Fusūs*.

In any case the *Fusūs* was taken by later commentators as the central text of the tradition of theoretical gnosis or doctrinal Sufism. Many of the major later works of this tradition are in fact commentaries upon this inspired text. The history of these commentaries, many of which are "original" works

themselves, stretching from the 7th/13th century to this day, is itself of great import for the understanding of this tradition and also reveals the widespread nature of the influence of this tradition from Morocco to the Malay world and China. Unfortunately, despite so much scholarship carried out in this field during the past few decades, there is still no thorough history of commentaries upon the *Fusūs* any more than there is a detailed history of the tradition of theoretical gnosis and/or Sufi metaphysics itself.

Ibn 'Arabī died in Damascus in 638/1240 and it was from there that his teachings were disseminated. Some of his immediate students, who were particularly drawn to pure metaphysics and gnosis, with a number also having had training in Islamic philosophy, began to interpret the master's teachings and especially his *Fusūs* in a more systematic and philosophical fashion thereby laying the ground for the systematic formulation of that Supreme Science of the Real with which the tradition of theoretical gnosis is concerned. The first commentator upon the *Fusūs* was Ibn 'Arabī's immediate student and Qūnawī's close companion, 'Afīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī (690/1291) who commented upon the whole text but in summary fashion.[9] But the most influential propagator of the master's teachings in the domain of gnosis and metaphysics and the person who gave the systematic exposition that characterizes later expressions of theoretical gnosis is Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 673/1274).[10] This most important student of Ibn 'Arabī did not write a commentary on the text of the *Fusūs*, but he did write a work entitled *al-Fukūk* which explains the titles of the chapters of the *Fusūs* and was considered by many a later Sufi and gnostic as a key for the understanding of the mysteries of Ibn 'Arabī's text.[11] Qūnawī is also the author of a number of other works of a gnostic (*'irfānī*) nature, chief among them the *Miftāh al-ghayb*, a monumental work of theoretical gnosis which, along with its commentary by Shams al-Dīn Fanārī known as *Misbāh al-uns*, became one of the premier texts for the teaching of theoretical gnosis especially in Turkey and Persia.[12]

Qūnawī trained a number of students who themselves became major figures in the tradition of theoretical gnosis. But before turning to them it is necessary to mention a poet who was a contemporary of Ibn 'Arabī and who was to play an exceptional role in the later history of this tradition. This poet is 'Umar ibn al-Fārid (d. 632/1235), perhaps the greatest Sufi poet of the Arabic language, whose *al-Tā'iyyah* is considered as a complete exposition of the doctrines of *'irfān* expressed in sublime poetry, and the subject of several commentaries which are themselves seminal texts of *'irfān*.[13] There were also many important Persian poets such as Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī (d. 688/1289), Awhad al-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 635/1238), Shams al-Dīn Maghribī (d. 809/1406-07), Mahmūd Shabistarī (d. circa 718/1318), and 'Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492), not to speak of Turkish poets and those

of the Subcontinent who expressed Ibn 'Arabian teachings in the medium of poetry but their poems do not belong strictly to doctrinal texts of the tradition of theoretical gnosis with which we are concerned here although some of the commentaries on their poetry do, such as *Sharh-i gulshan-i rāz* of Shams al-Dīn Lāhījī (d. before 900/1494) as do some poetic texts such as *Ashi''at al-lama'āt* and *Lawā'ih* of Jāmī.

Returning to Qūnawī's students, as far as the subject of this essay is concerned the most notable and influential for the later tradition was first of all Sa'īd al-Dīn Farghānī (d. 695/1296) who collected the commentaries of his master in Persian on the *Tā'iyyah* and on their basis composed a major work in both Persian and Arabic (which contains certain additions) with the title *Mashāriq al-darārī* and *Muntaha'l-madārik*, respectively.[14] Secondly, one must mention Mu'ayyid al-Dīn Jandī (d. 700/1300), the author of the first extensive commentary upon the *Fusūs*[15] which also influenced the very popular commentary of his student 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (d. 730/1330).[16] Both of these men also wrote other notable works on theoretical gnosis such as the Persian treatise *Nafhat al-rūh wa tuhfat al-futūh* of Jandī and the Arabic *Ta'wīl al-qur'ān* of Kāshānī which has been also mistakenly attributed to Ibn 'Arabī. This work is illustrative of a whole genre of writings which explain the principles of gnosis and metaphysics on the basis of commentary upon the inner levels of meaning of the Quran. During this early period, when the School of theoretical gnosis was taking shape, there were other figures of importance associated with the circle of Ibn 'Arabī and Qūnawī although not the students of the latter such as Sa'd al-Dīn Hamūyah (d. 649/1252) and his student 'Azīz al-Dīn Nasafī (d. before 700/1300) who wrote several popular works in Persian based on the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujūd* and *al-insān al-kāmil*. It is not possible, however, in this short historical review to deal with all such figures.

The Arab World

From this early foundation located in Syria and Anatolia the teachings of the School of Ibn 'Arabī and theoretical gnosis spread to different regions of the Islamic world. In summary fashion we shall try to deal with some of the most important figures in each region. Let us commence with the Arab world. In the Maghrib a very strong Sufi tradition has been preserved over the centuries but Maghribī Sufism, although devoted to gnosis in its purest form as we see in such figures as Abū Madyan, Ibn Mashīsh and Abu'l-Hasan al-Shādhilī, was not given to long theoretical expositions of gnosis as we see in the East.[17] Most works from this region were concerned with the practice of the Sufi path and explanation of practical Sufi teachings. One had to wait for the 12th/18th century to find in the works of Ahmad ibn 'Ajībah (d.

1224/1809-10) treatises which belong to the genre of theoretical gnosis. But the oral tradition based on Ibn 'Arabian teachings was kept alive as we see in the personal instructions and also written works of such celebrated 14th/20th century Sufi masters of the Maghrib as Shaykh al-'Alawī (d. 1353/1934) and Shaykh Muhammad al-Tādilī (d. 1371/1952).[18] Maghribī works on gnosis tended, however, to be usually less systematic and philosophical in their exposition of gnosis than those of the East.

A supreme example of Ibn 'Arabian teachings emanating from the Maghrib is to be found in the writings of the celebrated Algerian *amīr* and Sufi master 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jazā'irī (d. 1300/1883), who taught the works of Ibn 'Arabī when in exile in Damascus. Amīr 'Abd al-Qādir also composed a number of independent works on gnosis such as the *Kitāb al-mawāqif.*[19] To this day the text of the *Fusūs* and the *Futūhāt* are taught in certain Sufi enters of the Maghrib especially those associated with the Shādhiliyyah Order which has continued to produce over the centuries its own distinct genre of Sufi literature going back to the prayers of Abu'l-Hasan al-Shādhilī (d. 656/1258) and especially the treatises of the third pole of the Order, Ibn 'Atā' Allāh al-Iskandarī (d.709/1309). In later centuries these two currents, the first issuing from early Shādhilism and the second from Ibn 'Arabian gnosis were to meet in many notable figures of Sufism from that as well as other regions.

There was greater interest in theoretical gnosis in the eastern part of the Arab world as far as the production of written texts is concerned. Strangely enough, however, Egypt, which has always been a major center of Sufism, is an exception. In that ancient land there has always been more interest in practical Sufism and Sufi ethics than in speculative thought and doctrinal Sufism although Akbarian teachings had spread to Mamluk Egypt in the 7th/13th century. There were also some popularizers of Ibn 'Arabī's teachings in Egypt, perhaps chief among them 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rānī (d. 973/1565), whose well known works present a more popular version of the *Futūhāt* and *Fusūs.*[20] He tried also to link Shādhilī teachings with those of Ibn 'Arabī. There are, however, few notable commentaries on classical texts of gnosis in Egypt in comparison with those one finds in many other lands. Theoretical gnosis was, nevertheless, taught and studied by many Egyptian figures. In this context it is interesting to note that even the modernist reformer Muhammad 'Abduh turned to the study of Ibn 'Arabī later in life. Opposition to these writings has remained, however, strong to this day in many circles in that land as one sees in the demonstrations in front of the Egyptian Parliament some years ago on the occasion of the publication of the *Futūhāt* by Osman Yahya who had edited the text critically.

In the Yemen there was great interest in Ibn 'Arabian gnosis in the School of Zabīd especially under the Rasūlids up to the 9th/15th century.

Ismā'ī al-Jabartī (d. 806/1403), Ahmad ibn al-Raddād (d. 821/1417-18) and 'Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī (d. 832/1428) were particularly significant figures of this School in the Yemen.[21] Al-Jīlī, who was originally Persian but resided in the Yemen, is particularly important because of his magnum opus, *al-Insān al-kāmil*, a primary work of gnosis that is used as a text for the instruction of theoretical gnosis from Morocco to India to this day. It is a more systematic exposition of the teaching of Ibn 'Arabī.[22]

In the eastern Arab world it was especially in greater Palestine and Syria that one sees continuous interest in theoretical gnosis and the writing of important commentaries on Ibn 'Arabī such as that of 'Abd al-Ghanyī al-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731) on the *Fusūs*.[23] Also, the defense by Ibrāhīm ibn Hasan al-Kurānī (d. 1101/1690), a Kurdish scholar who resided in Mecca, of the gnosis of Ibn 'Arabī had much influence in Syria and adjoining areas. Although, as in Egypt and elsewhere, many jurists and theologians in Syria going back to Ibn Taymiyyah and students of Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftāzanī, opposed the doctrines of Ibn 'Arabian gnosis, this School remained very much alive and continues to survive to this day in that region. One of the most remarkable contemporary Sufis who died in Beirut just a few years ago, the woman saint, Sayyidah Fātimah al-Yashrutiyyah, gave the title *al-Riḥlah ila'l-Ḥaqq* to her major work on Sufism on the basis of a dream of Ibn 'Arabī.[24]

Ottoman Turkey

Turning to the Turkish part of the Ottoman world, we find a continuous and strong tradition in the study of theoretical gnosis going back to al-Qūnawī himself and his circle in Konya. Foremost among these figures after the founding of this School are Dāwūd Qaysarī (d. 751/1350) and Shams al-Dīn Fanārī (d. 834/1431). A student of Kāshānī, Qaysarī wrote a number of works on gnosis, including his commentary on the *Tā'iyyah* of Ibn al-Fārid, but chief among them is his commentary upon the *Fuṣūṣ*, which is one of the most thorough and remains popular to this day.[25] He also wrote an introduction to this work called *al-Muqaddimah* which summarizes the whole cycle of gnostic doctrines in a masterly fashion and has been itself the subject of many commentaries including important glosses by Ayatollah Khomeini to which we shall turn shortly and a magisterial one by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī (d. 1426/2005).[26] As for Fanārī, besides being a chief *qādī* in the Ottoman Empire and a major authority on Islamic Law, he was the author of what many Turkish and Persian students of gnosis consider as the most advanced text of *'irfān*, namely the *Misbāh al-uns*.[27] It is strange that today in Bursa where he is buried as elsewhere in Turkey, he is known primarily as a jurist and in Persia as a gnostic. In addition to

these two major figures, one can mention Bālī Effendi (d. 960/1553), well known commentator of Ibn 'Arabī, and many other Sufis who left behind notable works on theoretical gnosis up the 14th/20th century. In fact the influence of this School in the Ottoman world was very extensive including in such areas as Bosnia and is to be found in many different types of Turkish thinkers into the contemporary period. Among the most famous among them one can name Ahmed Avni Konuk (d. 1357/1938) who wrote a four volume commentary on the *Fusūs*; his contemporary Ferid Ram (d. 1363/1944), who was at the same time a gnostic, philosopher and political figure and the author of several works on Ibn 'Arabian gnosis; and Ismail Fenni Ertugrul (d. 1359/1940), a philosopher who used the teachings of Ibn 'Arabī to refute the errors of modern Western philosophy, especially materialism. His writings contributed greatly to the revival of interest in metaphysics in 14th/20th century Turkey.[28]

Muslim India

We have been moving eastward in this brief historical survey and logically we should now turn to Persia and adjacent areas including Shi'ite Iraq, which has been closely associated with Persia intellectually since the Safavid period and Afghanistan which also belongs to the same intellectual world as Persia. Because, however, of the central role played in Persia in the cultivation of *'irfān-i nazarī* during the past few centuries, we shall turn to it at the end of this survey and first direct our attention farther east to India, Southeast Asia and China.

Although a thorough study has never been made of all the important figures associated with the School of Ibn 'Arabī and theoretical gnosis in the Indian Subcontinent, the research that has been carried out so far reveals a very widespread influence of this School in that area. Already in the 8th/14th century Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī, the Persian Sufi who migrated to Kashmir (d. 786/1385), helped to spread Ibn 'Arabī's ideas in India. He not only wrote a Persian commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ*, but also composed a number of independent treatises on *'irfān*.[29] A century later 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī ibn Ahmad Mahā'imī (d. 835/1432) not only commented upon the *Fuṣūṣ* and Qūnāwī's *Nusūs*, but also wrote several independent expositions of gnosis of a more philosophical nature in Arabic. These works are related in many ways in approach to later works on gnosis written in Persia. He also wrote an Arabic commentary upon Shams al-Dīn Maghribī's *Jām-i jahānnamāy* which some believe received much of its inspiration from the *Mashāriq al-darārī* of Farghānī. It is interesting to note that Maghribī's poetry, which like that of many other poets such as Kirmānī, 'Irāqī, Shabistarī, Shāh Ni'mat Allāh Walī (d. 834/1431) and Jāmī were based on basic gnostic theses such

as *wahdat al-wujūd*, was especially appreciated by those followers of the School of Ibn 'Arabī who were acquainted with the Persian language as was the poetry of Ibn *al-Fārid* among Arab, Persian, Turkish and Indian followers of that School.

Notable exponents of theoretical gnosis in India are numerous and even the better known ones cannot be mentioned here.[30] But it is necessary to mention one figure who is probably the most profound master of this School in the Subcontinent. He is *Muhibb* Allāh Ilāhābādī (also known as Allāhābādī) (d. 1058/1648).[31] Author of an Arabic and even longer Persian commentary on the *Fusūs* and also an authoritative commentary on the *Futūhāt*, Ilāhābādī also wrote independent treatises on *'irfān*. His writings emphasize intellection and sapience rather than just spiritual states which many Sufis in India as elsewhere claimed as the sole source of divine knowledge. The significance of the works of *Muhibb* Allāh Ilāhābādī in the tradition of theoretical gnosis under consideration in this essay and his later influence in India are immense. He marks one of the major peaks of the School not only in India, but in the whole of the Islamic world.

The central thesis of Ibn 'Arabian gnosis, that is, *wahdat al-wujūd* had a life of its own in India. While certain Sufis, such as Shaykh *Ahmad* Sirhindī, opposed its usual interpretation, it was embraced by many Sufis including such great saints as Gīsū Dirāz and Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' and many of their disciples. One can hardly imagine the history of Sufism in the Subcontinent without the central role played by *'irfān-i nazarī*. Even notable Indian philosophers and theologians such as Shāh Walī Allāh (d. 1176/1762) of Delhi wrote works highly inspired by this School whose influence continued into the 14th/20th century as we see in some of the works of Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanwī (d. 1362/1943).[32] Moreover, once the philosophical School of Illumination (*ishrāq*) and the Transcendent Theosophy or Philosophy (*al-hikmat al-muta'āliyah*) reached India, there were many interactions between these Schools and the School of *'irfān* as we also see in Persia itself.

Southeast Asia

Turning to Southeast Asia and the Malay world, here we encounter a unique phenomenon, namely the role of the School of Ibn 'Arabī, sometimes called *wujūdiyyah*, in the very formation of Malay as an intellectual language suitable for Islamic discourse. Hamzah Fansūrī (d. 1000/1592), the most important figure of this School, was a major Malay poet and played a central role in the development of Malay as an Islamic language while he also had a command of Arabic and Persian. He was, moreover, a master of the doctrines of the School of Ibn 'Arabī.[33] He was followed in his attachment to this

School by Shams al-Dīn Sumātrānī (d. 1040/1630). Although this School was opposed by certain other Malay Sufis such as Nūr al-Dīn Rānirī and most Malays paid more attention to the operative rather than the doctrinal aspect of Sufism, the School of theoretical gnosis continued to be studied in certain places and even today there are circles in Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia where the teachings of this School are followed and many of the classical texts continue to be studied.[34]

China

A word must also be said about China. Until the 11th/17th century Chinese Muslims who dealt with intellectual matters did so on the basis of Arabic and Persian texts. It was only in the 11th/17th century that they began to use classical Chinese and to seek to express Islamic metaphysics and philosophy in the language of Neo-Confucianism. Henceforth, there developed a significant body of Islamic thought in Chinese that is being systematically studied only now. It is interesting to note that two of the classical Islamic works to be rendered the earliest into Chinese are firstly the *Lawā'ih* of Jāmī, which is a masterly summary of *'irfān* in Persian, translated by Liu Chih (d. circa 1670) as *Chen-chao-wei* ("Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm"); and secondly the *Ashi"at al-lama'āt* also by Jāmī and again, as already mentioned, dealing with *'irfān*, translated by P'o Na-chih (d. after 1697) as *Chao-yüan pi-chüeh* ("The Mysterious Secret of the Original Display").[35] Also the first Chinese Muslim thinker to expound Islamic teachings in Chinese, that is, Wang Tai-yü (d. 1657 or 1658), who wrote his *Real Commentary on the True Teaching* in 1642 to be followed by several other works, was steeped in the same *'irfānī* tradition. The School of theoretical gnosis was therefore destined to play a major role in the encounter on the highest level between the Chinese and the Islamic intellectual traditions during the past few centuries.

Persia

Persia was destined to become one of the main centers, if not the central arena, for the later development of theoretical gnosis. The circle of Qūnawī was already closely connected to the Persian cultural world and many of its members, including Qūnawī himself, wrote in Persian. Qūnawī's student, Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī is considered one of the greatest poets of the Persian language. Among other early members of the School one can mention Sa'd al-Dīn Hamūyah, his disciple 'Azīz al-Dīn Nasafī, who wrote on gnosis in readily accessible Persian, Awḥad al-Dīn Balyānī (d. 686/1288) from Shiraz, whose famous *Risālat al-ahadiyyah* was for a long time attributed to Ibn

'Arabī,[36] and 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī who, as already mentioned, is a major figure of the School of theoretical gnosis and a prominent commentator upon the *Fusūs*. From the 8th/14th century onward in Persia we see on the one hand the continuation of the School of theoretical gnosis through the appearance of prose works in both Arabic and Persian either in the form of commentary upon the *Fusūs* and other seminal texts of this School or as independent treatises. On the other hand we observe the deep influence of this School in Sufi literature, especially poetry. A supreme example is the *Gulshan-i rāz* of *Mahmūd* Shabistarī, one of the greatest masterpieces of Persian Sufi poetry which summarizes the principles of Ibn 'Arabian gnosis in verses of celestial beauty. That is why its commentary by *Muhammad* Lāhījī in the 9th/15th century is such a major text of theoretical gnosis. Here, however, we are only concerned with the prose and systematic works of theoretical gnosis and not the poetical tradition but the nexus between the two should not be forgotten as we see in the works of 'Irāqī, Shāh Ni'mat Allāh Walī, Jāmī and many others.

Another important event that took place in the 8th/14th century and left its deep influence upon the history of the School during the Safavid, Qajar and Pahlavi periods was the integration of Ibn 'Arabian gnosis into Shi'ism which possesses its own gnostic teachings to which scholars refer as *'irfān-i shī'ī*. These two outwardly distinct schools are inwardly connected and go back to the original esoteric and gnostic dimension of the Islamic revelation. It was most of all Sayyid *Ḥ*aydar Āmulī (d. 787/1385) who brought about a synthesis of these two branches of the tree of gnosis, although he also did make certain criticisms of Ibn 'Arabī, especially concerning the question of *walāyah/wilāyah*. Many others walked later in his footsteps. Āmulī was at once a major Twelve-Imam Shi'ite theologian and a Sufi devoted to the School of Ibn 'Arabī. His *Jāmi' al-asrār* is a pivotal text for the gnosis of Ibn 'Arabī in a Shi'ite context.[37] He was also the author of a major commentary upon the *Fuṣūṣ* as well as independent metaphysical treatises. The later development of theoretical gnosis in Persia, as well as the School of Transcendent Theosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā cannot be fully understood without consideration of Āmulī's works.

The 8th/14th to the 10th/15th century marks a period of intense activity in the field of theoretical gnosis and the School of Ibn 'Arabī in Persia. Commentaries upon the *Fuṣūṣ* continued to appear. The first in Persian was most likely that of Rukn al-Dīn Mas'ūd Shīrāzī, known as Bāhā Ruknā (d. 769/1367).[38] But there were many others by such figures as Tāj al-Dīn Khwārazmī (d. circa 838/1435),[39] Shāh Ni'mat Allāh Walī, Ibn Turkah (d. 830/1437) and Jāmī, who in a sense brings this period to an end. This extensive activity in the domain of gnosis associated specifically with the School of Ibn 'Arabī was in addition to the flowering of the Sufism of the

School of Khurasan and Central Asia and profound gnostic teachings, mostly in poetic form, of figures such as 'Attār and Rūmī on the one hand and the Kubrawiyyah School founded by Najm al-Dīn Kubrā on the other. We can hardly overemphasize the importance of the Khurasānī and Central Asian Schools and their profound metaphysical teachings, but in this essay we shall not deal with them, being only concerned with *'irfān-i nazarī* in its association with the School of Ibn 'Arabī.

Among the gnostic figures of this period, Ṣā'in al-Dīn ibn Turkah Iṣfahānī stands out as far as his later influence is concerned. The author of many independent treatises on metaphysics and the traditional sciences, he also wrote a commentary upon the *Fusūs* which became popular.[40] But the work that made him one of the pillars of the School of theoretical gnosis in Persia during later centuries is his *Tamhīd al-qawā'id.*[41] This masterly treatment of the cycle of gnosis became a popular textbook for the teaching of the subject in Persia especially during the Qajar period and has remained so to this day as one sees in the extensive recension of it by the contemporary Persian philosopher and gnostic, 'Abd Allāh Jawādī Āmulī.[42]

The figure, who was given the title of the "Seal of Persian Poets", that is, 'Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī from Herat, was also in a sense the seal of this period in the history of theoretical gnosis in Persia. One of the greatest poets of the Persian language, he was also a master of Ibn 'Arabian gnosis and in a sense synthesized within his works the two distinct currents of Islamic spirituality that flowed from Ibn 'Arabī and Rūmī. Jāmī is the author of a number of commentaries upon the works of Ibn 'Arabī such as the famous *Naqd al-nusūs fī sharh naqsh al-fusūs.*[43] He also authored summaries of the teachings of this School in works already mentioned such as the *Lawā'iḥ* and *Ashi''at al-lama'āt*, both literary masterpieces which are used as texts for the teaching of *'irfān* to this day.[44]

The spread of Twelve-Imam Shi'ism in Persia during the Safavid period transformed the scene as far as the study and teaching of *'irfān* was concerned. During the earlier part of Safavid rule, many Sufi orders flourished in Persia whereas from the 11th/17th century onward opposition grew against Sufism especially among the class of Shi'ite scholars who henceforth chose to speak of *'irfān* rather than *taṣawwuf.*[45] Although other types of Sufi and gnostic writings appeared during this period by members of various Sufi orders such as the Dhahabīs and *'irfān-i shī'ī* also flourished in certain circles, few new works on the subject of theoretical gnosis appeared during this period in comparison to the previous era. The main influence of the School of Ibn 'Arabī came to be felt through the writings of Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1050/1640/41), who was deeply influenced by Shaykh al-Akbar and quoted from him extensively in his *Asfār* and elsewhere.[46] But technically speaking the School of Mullā Ṣadrā is associated with *ḥikmat*

and not *'irfān*, although Mullā Ṣadrā was also a gnostic and deeply versed in Ibn 'Arabian teachings. But he integrated elements of this teaching into his *al-Hikmat al-muta'āliyah* (Transcendent Theosophy or Philosophy) and did not write separate treatises on pure gnosis in the manner of an Ibn 'Arabī or Qūnawī. It is highly significant that Mullā Ṣadrā did not leave behind a commentary on the *Fusūs* like that of Kāshānī or Qaysarī nor write a treatise like *Tamhīd al-qawā'id* although he was well acquainted with Ibn Turkah. Nor do we find major works devoted purely to theoretical gnosis or *'irfān-i nazarī* by his students such as Fayd Kāshānī, who was also a gnostic, or Lāhījī. The School of *'irfān-i nazarī* certainly continued during the Safavid era but the major intellectual thrust of the period was in the creation of the School of Transcendent Theosophy, which had incorporated major theses of *'irfān* such as *wahdat al-wujūd* into its philosophical system, but which was distinct in the structure of its doctrines, manner of presentation and method of demonstration from *'irfān*. Furthermore, the subject of *ḥikmat* is "being conditioned by negation" (*wujūd bi-shart-i lā*) while the subject of *'irfān* is totally non-conditioned being (*wujūd lā bi-shart*).

In any case as far as Persia is concerned, one had to wait for the Qajar period to see a major revival of the teaching of *'irfān-i nazarī* and the appearance of important commentaries on classical texts of this tradition. This revival occurred along with the revivification of the teachings of the School of Mullā Ṣadrā and many masters of this period were both *hakīm* and *'ārif*, while *'irfān* continued to influence philosophy deeply. The first major figure to mention in the context of the School of *'irfān* during the Qajar period is Sayyid Radī Lārījānī (d. 1270/1853) who was a student of Mullā 'Alī Nūrī in *ḥikmat* but we know less of his lineage in *'irfān*.[47] He is said to have possessed exalted spiritual states and was given the title of "Possessor of the States of the Inner (*bātin*) World" by his contemporaries.[48] We know that he taught the *Fuṣūṣ* and *Tamhīd al-qawā'id* in Isfahan and was considered as a saint as well as master of *'irfān-i naẓarī*.

Sayyid Radī's most important student was Āqā Muhammad Ridā Qumsha'ī (d. 1306/1888-9), whom many Persian experts on *'irfān* consider as a second Ibn 'Arabī and the most prominent commentator upon gnostic texts such as the *Fuṣūṣ* since the time of Qūnawī. Āqā Muhammad Ridā studied in Isfahan but later migrated to Tehran which became henceforth perhaps the most important for the teaching of *'irfān-i naẓarī* for many decades.[49] There, he taught and trained numerous important students in both *'irfān* and *ḥikmat*. He also wrote a number of important glosses and commentaries on such works as the *Tamhīd al-qawā'id* and *Qaysarī*'s commentary on the *Fusūs* as well as some of the works of Mullā Ṣadrā, in addition to independent treatises. Like so many masters of *'irfān-i nazarī*, Āqā Muhammad Ridā was also a fine poet and composed poetry under the

pen-name Ṣahbā. Unfortunately much of his poetry is lost. It is also of great significance to note that Āqā Muhammad Ridā emphasized the importance of spiritual practice and the need for a spiritual master.[50]

One of Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā's important students was Mīrzā Hāshim Ashkiwarī Rashtī (d. 1332/1914), commentator upon *Misbāh al-uns*, who took over the circle of instruction of *'irfān* in Tehran after Āqā Muhammad Ridā. He was in turn teacher of such famous *Hakīms* and *'ārifs* of the past century as Mīrzā Mahdī Āshtiyānī (d. 1362/1953), Mīrzā *Ahmad* Āshtiyānī (d. 1359/1940), Sayyid Muhammad Kāẓim 'Assār (d. 1396/1975) and Muhammad 'Alī Shāhābādī (d. 1369/1951).[51] The latter is particularly important not only for his own writings on gnosis including his *Rashahāt al-bihār*, but for being the master of Ayatollah Khomeini in *'irfān-i naẓarī*, the person with whom the latter studied the *Fusūs* without the presence of any other student.[52] Many of the ideas of Ayatollah Khomeini in his *Ta'līqāt*, *Sharh du'ā-i sahar* and *Misbāh al-hidāyah ila'l-khilāfah wa'l-walāyah/ wilāyah* reflect the interpretations of Shāhābādī whom he revered highly.

The extensive political fame and influence of Ayatollah Rūh Allāh Khumaynī (Khomeini) (d. 1409/1989) has prevented many people in the West and even within the Islamic world to pay serious attention to his gnostic works,[53] and his place in the long history of theoretical gnosis outlined in a summary fashion above. There is no doubt that he was attracted to the study of *'irfān* from an early age and in later years, while he also studied *ḥikmat*, not to speak of the transmitted sciences, his great love remained *'irfān*, although he was also a recognized master of the School of Mullā Ṣadrā.[54] In his writings he combined the tradition of *'irfān-i shī'ī*[55] and that of Ibn 'Arabī. For example his *Sharh du'ā-i sahar* belongs to the world of Shi'ite gnosis; the *Ta'līqāt 'alā sharh fusūs il-hikam wa misbāh il-uns* belong to the tradition of Ibn 'Arabian gnosis as interpreted over the centuries by Shi'ite gnostics and with many new insights into the understanding of these classical texts; and *Misbāh al-hidāyah ila'l-khilāfah wa'l-walāyah/wilāyah* represent a synthesis of the two schools of gnosis. Other mystical works of Ayatollah Khomeini such as *Chihil Hadīth*, *Sirr al-Salāh*, *Ādāb al-ṣalāh* and *Sharh-i Hadīth-i junūd-i 'aql wa jahl* are also works of a gnostic and esoteric quality reminiscent of a Fayd Kāshānī or Qādī Sa'īd Qummī and going back even earlier, classical Sufi works on such subjects, but they do not fall fully under the category of *'irfān-i naẓarī* as we have defined it in this essay.[56] Ayatollah Khomeini also composed poems of a mystical and gnostic nature.

For many it is interesting to note and might even appear as perplexing that although later in life he entered fully into the arena of politics, earlier in his life Ayatollah Khomeini was very much interested not only in theoretical gnosis but also in operative Sufism with its ascetic dimension and emphasis on detachment from the world. The key to this

riddle should perhaps be sought first of all in the stages of man's journeys (*asfār*) to God mentioned by Mullā Ṣadrā at the beginning of the *Asfār*, stages which include both the journey from creation (*al-khalq*) to God (*al-Ḥaqq*) and return to creation with God and secondly in Ayatollah Khomeini's understanding of the stages of this journey as they applied to him and to what he considered to be his mission in life. In any case although the later part of his life differed greatly outwardly from that of Āqā Muhammad Riḍā, his early life was much like that of the figure whom he called "the master of our masters". Also like Āqā Muhammad Riḍā, Ayatollah Khomeini was poetically gifted and deeply immersed in the tradition of Persian Sufi poetry.

There is need in the future to study more closely the relation between the contemplative and active dimensions of life in the case of Ayatollah Khomeini in relation to the teachings of *'irfān*, and more generally in the lives of several other major Muslim political figures of the 14th/20th century such as Hasan al-Bannā', the founder of the Ikhwān al-muslimīn, and Mawlānā Mawdūdī, the founder of Jamā'at-i islāmī of Pakistan, both of whom were deeply immersed in politics while being earlier in life devoted in one way or another to Sufism. In the case of none of the major Muslim political figures of the 14th/20th century, however, is there such a close relationship with Sufism and *'irfān* as one finds in the case of Ayatollah Khomeini. Such matters raise issues of central concern for the understanding of the relation between Sufism and *'irfān* on the one hand and external political action on the other. These issues are not, however, our concern here. What is important to note is that irrespective of his political views and actions, and his particular interpretation of *walāyah/wilāyah*, Ayatollah Khomeini remains an important figure in the long history of theoretical gnosis in the Islamic world.

The tradition of *'irfān-i naẓarī* continues to this day in Persia.[57] After the generation of such figures as Ayatollah Khomeini, 'Allāmah Tabātabā'ī (d. 1404/1983), who was a major gnostic without writing any commentaries on Ibn 'Arabī, and also one of the important masters of *'irfān*, Sayyid Muhammad Kāzim 'Assār, notable figures have appeared upon the scene such as Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyanī, Hasan-zādah Āmulī, and Jawādi Āmulī, of whom the latter two still teach at Qom. Āshtiyanī's commentary upon the introduction of Qaysarī to the *Fusūs* mentioned above, as well as a number of his other commentaries such as those on *Tamhīd al-qawā'id* and *Naqd al-nusūs*, are major contemporary texts of theoretical gnosis, while the recent commentary by Hasan-zādah Āmulī on the *Fusūs* entitled *Mumidd al-himam dar sharḥ-i fusūs al-ḥikam*[58] reveals the living nature of this School in Persia as does Jawād Āmulī's recension of *Tamhīd al-qawā'id*.

With What Does Theoretical Gnosis Deal?

Before turning to the significance of theoretical gnosis and doctrinal Sufism, it is necessary to mention a few words about what subjects this Supreme Science treats. And before delineating the subjects made known through theoretical gnosis, one needs to know how one can gain such a knowledge. The knowledge of the Supreme Reality or the Supreme Substance is itself the highest knowledge and constitutes the very substance of principial knowledge. As Frithjof Schuon, one of the foremost contemporary expositors of gnosis and metaphysics has said, "The substance of knowledge is Knowledge of the Substance."[59] This knowledge is contained deep within the heart/intellect and gaining it is more of a recovery than a discovery. It is ultimately remembrance, the Platonic *anamnesis*. The faculty associated with this knowledge is the intellect (*al-'aql*), the *nous*, not to be confused with reason. The correct functioning of the intellect within man is in most cases in need of that objective manifestation of the intellect that is revelation.[60] In any case its attainment always requires intellectual intuition, which is ultimately a Divine gift, and the ability to "taste" the truth. In the Islamic tradition this supreme knowledge or gnosis is associated with such qualities as *dhawq* (taste), *ḥads* (intuition), *ishrāq* (illumination) and *hudūr* (presence). Those who are able to understand gnosis must possess certain intellective gifts not to be confused with powers of mere ratiocination. Also in Islam gnosis has always been related to the inner meaning of the revelation and its attainment of the initiatic and esoteric power of *walāyah/ wilāyah* which issues from the fountain of prophecy and about which so many Muslim gnostics from Ibn 'Arabī to Sayyid Haydar Āmulī and from Āqā Muhammad Rihā Qumsha'ī to Muhammad 'Alī Shāhābādī to Ayatollah Khomeini have written with differing interpretations.

Turning now to the subjects with which theoretical gnosis and doctrinal Sufism deal, we must mention that it is not our intention here to expound its teachings, but only the subjects which are of concern to this School.[61] The supreme subject of gnosis may be said to be the Supreme Principle or Reality which is absolute and infinite and not even bound by the condition of being absolute and infinite. The gnostics often write that it is Absolute Being without even the "limitation" of absoluteness. It is therefore the Reality which is both Beyond-Being and Absolute Being. Later gnostics called this supreme subject *wujūd-i lā bi-shart-i maqsamī*, the totally unconditioned Being which is the ground for all divisions and distinctions. Gnosis, therefore, deals not only with ontology but with a metaphysics that is grounded beyond Being in the Supreme Reality of which Being usually understood is the first determination. It begins with the Divine Ipseity or *Dhāt* that is above all limits and determinations and that is sometimes

referred to as *al-Ḥaqq* (the Truth). It also deals with multiplicity within the Divine Order, that is, the Divine Names and Qualities which are so many Self-Determinations and Self-Disclosures of the Supreme Essence.

This Supreme Science (*al-'ilm al-a'lā*) that is gnosis also deals with manifestations of the Principle, with all the levels of universal existence from the archangelic to the material but views all that exists in the cosmic order in light of the Principle. It descends from the Principle to manifestation and deals with cosmology as a science of the cosmos in relation to the Principle, as a form of knowledge that provides maps to guide and orient human beings who are situated in the confines of cosmic existence to the Metacosmic Reality. This Supreme Science also deals of necessity with the human state in all its width, breadth, depth and height. It contains a most profound "science of man", which one could call an anthropology if this term were to be understood in its traditional and not modern sense, as well as a "science of spirit" within man or pneumatology which is absent from the worldview of the modern world. Finally, gnosis deals with the Principle and all the levels of manifestation from the point of view of the unity which dominates over all that exists and which is especially central to the Islamic perspective. One might say that Islamic metaphysics or gnosis is dominated by the two basic doctrines of the "transcendent oneness of Being" (*wahdat al-wujūd*) and the universal man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) which includes not only a gnostic anthropology but also a symbolic cosmology on the basis of the correspondence between the microcosm and macrocosm.

Theoretical gnosis is also concerned in the deepest sense with the reality of revelation and religion. The question of the relation between gnosis and esoterism on the one hand and the formal and exoteric aspect of religion on the other is a complicated one into which we cannot enter here. What is clear is that in every traditional society gnosis and esoterism have been inextricably tied to the religious climate in which they have existed. This is as true of Luria and Jewish esoterism as it is of Śankara and Hindu gnosis as well as everything in between. In any case in this essay, which deals with gnosis in the Islamic tradition, we need to mention the profoundest concern of the gnostics with the realities of religion and explanation of its teachings on the most profound level as we observe in many Sufi treatises on the inner meaning of the Islamic rites.[62]

Theoretical gnosis is concerned not only with the practical aspects of religion, but also with basic Islamic doctrines such as creation, prophecy, eschatology, etc. Islamic masters of gnosis speak of both the why and the how of creation. They speak of "creation *in* God" as well as creation *by* God.[63] They expound the doctrine of the immutable archetypes (*al-a'yān al-thābitah*) and the breathing of existence upon them associated with the Divine Mercy which brings about the created order. They see creation itself

as the Self-Disclosure of God.[64] They also discuss the renewal of creation (*tajdīd al-khalq*) at every moment.[65] Furthermore, theoretical gnosis speaks extensively about the end as well as the beginning of things. The deepest explanation of Islamic eschatology based on the Quran and *Ḥadīth* is found in such writings as the *Futūhāt al-makkiyyah* of Ibn 'Arabī.

In all traditional religions and cultural climes gnosis also provides the basis for the science of forms including artistic forms and makes comprehensible the language of symbolism. Although dealing at the highest level with the Formless, it is gnosis and metaphysics that provide the basis for the science of symbols especially in a world where the "symbolist spirit" has been lost.[66] In Islam treatises on theoretical gnosis do not usually deal explicitly in a separate section with forms and symbols but expound the principles of this science which are then applied when necessary. The writings of Ibn 'Arabī and Rūmī are replete with such examples. Such masters provide the science of spiritual hermenetics (*ta'wīl*) as well as apply it to diverse religious and artistic forms, symbols and myths including of course those found in the Quran itself.

Gnosis is illuminative and unitive knowledge and therefore it is natural that theoretical gnosis be concerned with knowledge as such, primarily sacred knowledge and knowledge of the sacred but also with the grades and the hierarchy of knowledge.[67] It is true that most traditional philosophies, including the Islamic, also deal with this issue, but it is only in works on theoretical gnosis that one finds the most universal treatment of this subject including of course supreme knowledge that is gnosis itself. Theoretical gnosis or *scientia sacra* is also the metaphysics that lies at the heart of perennial philosophy understood traditionally. It has been sometimes called theosophy, as this term was understood before its modern distortion, and is also related to what is called mystical theology and mystical philosophy in Western languages. In the Islamic tradition it has provided the ultimate criteria for the judgment of what constitutes *philosophia vera*. It has been foundational in the development of both traditional philosophy and the traditional sciences and is key to the deepest understanding of all traditional cosmological sciences including the "hidden sciences" (*al-'ulūm al-khafiyyah* or *gharībah*). The later traditional schools of philosophy that have persisted in the Islamic world to this day, chief among the School of Illumination founded by Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191) and the Transcendent Theosophy/Philosophy established by Mullā Ṣadrā, are closely associated with *'irfān*. One might in fact say that while after the Middle Ages and the Renaissance in the West philosophy became more and more wedded and also subservient to modern science, as we see so clearly in Kant, in the Islamic world philosophy became ever more closely associated with *'irfān* from which it drew its sustenance and whose vision of reality served as basis for

its philosophizing. One needs only read the works of Mullā Ṣadrā such as his *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah* or the treatises of Āqā 'Alī Mudarris such as his *Badāyi' al-ḥikam* to ascertain the truth of this assertion. Many of the works of the later Islamic philosophers are at the borderline between *hikmat* and *'irfān* although the two disciplines remain quite distinct from one another.

The Present Day Significance of Theoretical Gnosis

Today the Islamic world suffers greatly from the neglect of its own intellectual tradition and yet there are some contemporary modernized Muslim philosophers, especially in the Arab world and to some extent Turkey, who dismiss later Islamic philosophy precisely because of its association with *'irfān* which they criticize pejoratively as mere mysticism. At the other end of the spectrum there are those so-called fundamentalists who are opposed to both reason and gnosis and turn their backs on and moreover criticize the Islamic intellectual tradition, at whose heart stands gnosis, on the pretext of wanting to save Islam. They are blind to the fact that it is precisely this intellectual tradition of which Islam is in the direst need today, faced as it is with the challenges of the modern world that are primarily intellectual.

Some of the greatest problems facing Islam on an intellectual level today are the invasion of a secularist worldview and secular philosophies; the spread of a science and technology based on a secular view of nature and of knowledge of nature; the environmental crisis which is closely related to the spread of modern technology; religious pluralism and the need to comprehend in depth other religions; the need to defend religion itself against all the secularist or exclusivist Christian attacks against it emanating primarily from the West; the need to understand the principles of Islamic art and architecture and to apply these principles to creating authentic Islamic art and architecture today; to provide an authentic Islamic answer to the relation between religion and science; to formulate an Islamic science of the soul or psychology; and to establish a firm foundation for the harmony between faith and reason. The role of *'irfān* is central to the solution of all of these problems. It is only in gnosis that the unifying principle of faith and reason can be found. If one were only to understand *'irfān*, one would realize its supreme significance for Muslims today. Furthermore, *'irfān* is not enmeshed in the syllogistic form of reasoning to be found in Islamic philosophy, a form of reasoning that is alien to many people today. Paradoxically, therefore, it is in a sense more accessible to those possessing intellectual intuition than traditional schools of Islamic philosophy which can also play and in fact must play an important role in the contemporary intellectual life of the Islamic world.

As already mentioned, in the traditional Islamic world theoretical gnosis was not only opposed by certain, but certainly not all, jurists, theologians and philosophers; it was also opposed by certain Sufis who claimed that gnosis is the result of what is attained through spiritual states and not through reading books on gnosis. Titus Burckhardt once told us that when he first went to Fez as a young man, one day he took the *Fusūs* with him to a great teacher to study this basic text of *ma'rifah* or *'irfān* with him. The teacher asked him what book he was carrying under his arm. He said it was the *Fusūs*. The teacher smiled and said, "Those who are intelligent enough to understand the *Fusūs* do not need to study it, and those who are not intelligent enough are not competent to study it anyway." The master nevertheless went on to teach the young S. Ibrāhīm (Titus Burckhardt) the *Fusūs* but he was alluding to the significance of realized gnosis and not only its theoretical understanding, a knowledge that once realized delivers man from the bondage of ignorance, being by definition salvific knowledge. Burckhardt went on to translate a summary of the *Fusūs* into French, a translation which played a seminal role in the introduction of the School of theoretical gnosis and Ibn 'Arabī to the West. In fact, although the magisterial exposition of gnosis and metaphysics by traditional masters such as René Guénon, Frithjof Schuon, Burckhardt himself and others were directly related to inner inspiration and intellection as well as teachings of non-Islamic origin, they were also inextricably linked with the tradition of *'irfān* discussed in this essay.

Of course, one does not become a saint simply by reading texts of *'irfān* or even understanding them mentally. One has to realize their truths and "be" what one knows. Nevertheless, the body of knowledge contained in works of theoretical gnosis and doctrinal Sufism are a most precious science which Muslims must cherish as a gift from Heaven. This vast body of writings from Ibn 'Arabī and Qūnawī to Āqā *Muhammad Ridā* Qumsha'ī and Amīr 'Abd al-Qādir and in the contemporary period from Mawlānā Thanwī, Muhammad 'Alī Shāhābādī and Ayatollah Khomeini to Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī and Hasan-zādah Āmulī contain a body of knowledge of vast richness, a knowledge which alone can provide the deepest answers to the most acute contemporary intellectual, spiritual and even practical questions. But above all this tradition alone can provide for those Muslims capable of understanding it the Supreme Science of the Real, the science whose realization is the highest goal of human existence.[68]

The Practice of Mysticism (*'irfān-i 'amalī*) in Islam

Seyed Ghahreman Safavi,
SOAS, University of London

Abstract

This article introduces the theoretical aspects of the practice of mysticism in Islam. It examines the nature of mysticism, the mystic and his states, the goal of the mystic and the ethics of spiritual wayfaring. The author addresses major themes that are central concerns of mystical authors and describes their meaning. He describes and analyses mystical states drawing on the major practical and homiletic manuals of the 'Irfan tradition. The paper is both descriptive and prescriptive.

> "In His name who taught the soul to think
> Who enlightened the heart by the soul's insight."[69]

In this article, we attempt to provide a brief introduction to the theory of mystical practice as expounded in classical Islamic mystical texts. A range of issues is considered from the very nature of mysticism to specific states and stages of the path of the mystic. The mystic's path begins with self-reflection and a contemplation of creation that leads him to the One, his origin, and once the mystic embarks on his journey to the One to his origin he completes his circle of being. His origin is the One and his return is the One. First, he must start with creation.

I: Purpose and design of creation

One of the most positive and decisive Islamic teachings is that the creation has a definitive purpose. Islam contends that the act of creation

has not been aimless and in vain. It is for a purpose, as God says in the Holy Qur'ān:

> "Did you think that We had created you in vain and that you would never be recalled to Us?"[70]

One of the most important, positive and exalted objectives of God's prophets, indeed the ultimate purpose of creation, is for man to realise and perfect his being as a true servant of God, gaining intuitive knowledge and bearing witness to the Lord. As He said:

> "I was a hidden treasure but wished that they would know Me, therefore, I created mankind."[71]

And in the holy verse:

> "I only created mankind and the jinn so that they might worship Me."[72]

Indeed the divine phrase, " . . . that they would know Me" establishes the divine *Hadīth*. The truth, the inner reality and the ultimate in Islamic mysticism with respect to the infinite depth of meaning of the above Qur'ānic verses amounts to divine service to, and intuitive witnessing of, God.

II: Forgetting oneself

Usually when man enters this world, he becomes negligent of himself as a result of such tendencies as neglecting the Lord, seeking the world, pursuing power and status, and satisfying his carnal desires. As God has said

> . . . those who forgot Allah so He caused them to forget themselves.[73]

Man forgets the three essential questions of "Where have I come from?" "Where Am I going to?" and "Why am I here?" These are questions that establish the cause, the philosophy and the ultimate objective of the creation and set forth man's basic essence and his authentic self.

> Yesterday came and passed I did in it no action.
> And today in it by me heat no any bazaar.
> Tomorrow I will go without to know any secret.
> Not to be come was better for me than this coming.

III: Awakening

"Say: I exort you only to one thing, that rise up for Allah's sake in tows and singly, then ponder: there is no madness in your fellow-citizen; he is only a warner to you before a severe chastisement."(Qur'an, Surah Saba', 46).

During a man's lifetime often circumstances and certain conditions put an end to his negligence and awaken him to observe the blessings of God and make him realize his own sinfulness and how far he has strayed away from the exalted purpose of his own creation. Under such conditions, one understands one's own shortcomings and spiritual and mental states and stages like those of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham (d. 778), Bishr al-Hāfī (d. d. 841), Fudayl ibn 'Iyad, developing his character. As a result, he becomes aware of his real self, of what he is and of what he can be. By the light of guidance, the traveller seeketh the path to the Beloved. Hafiz said:

In this city, my fortune, I have tried;
From this whirlpool, my chattels 'tis necessary to draw.

IV: What is man and what is he capable of being?

Man has two facets or aspects, namely, matter and mind, body and soul, earthly and celestial, and the bestial and angelic. The Qur'ānic verse "We created man from dry clay, from black moulded loam."[74] points to the material aspect of man. The verse (15:29) " . . . and breathed of My spirit into him" is indicative of man's moral or divine aspects. Man's creation is the loftiest and most exalted model of creation as we read: "Verily, We created man in the best form."[75], "In him both worlds have met now a devil, next a human set."[76]

Man, this trustee of God,[77] this perfectionist and seeker of truth, this divinely trained[78] educated being,[79] and possessor of wonders is capable of being more ferocious and savage than any rabid animal and can sink deep in sins, in self love, in false pleasures and happiness. But man is capable of ascension to the highest levels of heaven and can fulfill the function of being God's caliph on earth.

"And about face from the Hades of the lewd.
All but prepares him to meet the highest good."[80]

And reach such status that, in the words of Hazrat 'Ali ibn Abi Talib ('A):

"If veils are removed from the face of the unknown, the secret,
nothing new will be revealed to him."[81]

Love, lover and beloved, reason and the reasonable shall be the same to him. According to Shabistari in *Golshan-i rāz*:

> "No distinction left among the parts
> The knower and the known united
> And merged in all the charts."[82]
> "Naught but His knowledge
> Can contain the mystic's heart
> Naught but the Absolute Being
> Can his intuition acknowledge."[83]

And, if the 'seventy thousand veils of darkness and of light' [84] that bar the peripatetic mystic from the presence of the Lord be removed by rigorous religious practices and by purging the self, or soul, man becomes a theomorphic being and finds peace and tranquility through his nearness to God. He acquires the contented soul (*al-nafs al-muṭma'inna*), which converts him into an entirely divine being. The prophetic tradition sets forth this status of light in the following terms:

> "And when My faithful servant approaches Me though prayers and good deeds, I shall bestow upon him of My affection. Hence forth, I shall be his ears by which He hears; I shall be his eyes to see with and he shall use My tongue and hands by which to say and to hold."[85]

And if divine love sets fire to the heart of this gem of the world of creation, this most noble creature (man), he shall attain to such an exalted stage as the following divine edict purports:

> "He who seeks Me finds Me
> He who finds Me knows Me
> He who knows Me befriend Me
> He who befriends Me loves Me
> He who loves Me shall be loved by Me
> And I shall destroy him who loves Me
> And he whom I destroy is entitled to revenge or 'blood money' from Me
> And I shall stand 'blood money' and at the disposal of him whom I have destroyed."[86]

However, attaining to such a superb position and to pure life and eternal serenity is possible only when:

"Dust and dirt are you entire
Cast them away now
Get dust off your heart
Make room worth of the Beloved
Make your exit to let Him in
His face shall be manifest to you
When you no more are
In your heart no light shall shine
Unless the snare are first removed
Your prayers shall avail you naught
Unless you give your-self up in full
When your essence is purged at last
Of things ugly and obscene
Your prayers shall surely shine
Well bright and all serene."[87]

V: Mysticism (*'irfān*) as an agent for uniting man with God

Of all the Islamic tenets and teachings, the one that is exclusively devoted to the basic issue of the manner and quality of man's spiritual conduct, his fight against carnal desires, is attainment of union with the Lord. Man thus ceases to exist independently but continues his existence in Him. This is mysticism or *'Irfan*.

Mystic knowledge, as a thorough cultural system that pertains to man's spiritual life, has its theoretical base in an unimpeachable belief in the fact that the most perfect way to receive the essence and the truth of existence is through intuitive knowledge and perception, the unification of reason with the reasoned and the reasonable, love with lover and the beloved. From the practical point of view, it is based on the performance of lawful ascetic practices, purification of the ego or soul, vigilance, reckoning of the self, the saying of prayers and passing beyond the surface and the superfluities of worldly affair and in the utmost attachment to the truths of all matters relating to body and soul.

'irfān (mysticism) is both theoretical and practical. The theoretical undertakes the elaboration and interpretation of God, the world and the man from a mystical viewpoint. It provides mystical answers to the three essential questions of life, namely the whence, wherefore and whither.

Practical mysticism is also called wayfaring or peripatetic journeying and sets forth the realisations and duties of man with himself, with the world and with God.[88] It denotes what a *salik* or walker, wayfarer, or peripatetic 'arif or mystic's initial conduct and its terminal points must be in order to become a Perfect Man (*insan-i kamil*) and successor of God on earth and reach the highest position that is possible for man to attain. That exalted

human status is the dissolution (*fanā*) of his being in God and his subsistence (*baqā*) by His will to eternal life. It describes an *'arif*'s duties of conduct, his means, his states and the experience he goes through on his way to join with the Lord. Ways to purge the self, to combat the ego and purify the soul are also included among these practices. Thus 'irfān is described as an intuitive knowledge of God that leads man to His presence and to the ultimate which is to witness and be in presence with God (*liqā'Allāh*).

VI: The Law, the Way and the Truth (*sharī'at, ṭarīqat, ḥaqīqat*)

In the clash of ideas among Islamic scholars and thinkers, some are exponents of pure fiqh or Islamic religious jurisprudence. They support the view that religion means the face value of what its laws and tenets signify. However, the *'urafā'* (plural for *'ārif*, meaning mystics) believe that religious laws and decrees have implications and meanings other than what meets the eye. [89] They hold that behind and beyond the surface and explicit meanings of religious edicts, there exist certain truths that are the real aims and objectives of religion. Therefore, the mystics have their own conclusions regarding the real import and significance of religious beliefs and precepts such as monotheism, prophethood, resurrection, daily prayers, the pilgrimage, fasting, and so on. The real mystics, to be sure, adhere to a holistic conception of life that comprises the law, the way and the truth (*sharī'at, ṭarīqat, ḥaqīqat*).[90] They maintain that attainment of truth is not possible except through religion. It has been said:

> "*Sharī*'at is the rind, Truth the kernel.
> Between the two lies the Way."[91]
>
> "Break up the shell
> Hold up the peal
> Cast off the rind
> Take up the sweet nut Word,
> With their rhetoric and syntax
> All have but a letter at the core
> No way to waste one's life
> The dear life to circle and spin
> Green peels reveal the juicy nut
> Crack the skin and get at the dehiscent pod
> Unripe is the nut not covered in skin
> Face-sheet in for often yield
> Glorious data of faith in charming din."[92]

The *'arif* regards the *sharī'at* (face, appearance) and *ṭarīqat* (the hidden, the concealed) as the guiding light and the way but his objective is his destination which is above these two and above all else. This he calls God and the Truth, *al-Ḥaqq* and *ḥaqīqat*, in which the realisation of all things and objects rest. The mystic regards the attainment to such knowledge as the ultimate point in all creation. He [93]sees all things and objects (in the universe) as seeking Him and desiring His knowledge, the *ṭarīqat* and the *sharī*'at are both preludes to such achievement.[94]

The *'urafā'* believe that the heart, the core and the essence (*bāṭin*) or the inner being of sharī'at is the way which they term ṭarīqat. This way or road ends in truth, which is monotheism and it occurs after the mystic has ceased to exist as an independent entity. Thus the 'ārif (mystic) believes in three things: the *sharī'at*, the *ṭarīqat* and the *ḥaqīqat*.[95]

Know that *sharī'at* is the word of the prophets, *ṭarīqat* is the deed or action of the prophets and *ḥaqīqat* is the vision or perception or insight of the prophets. The *sālik* or walker must first learn what he must of the *sharī'at*. Then he must perform of the actions of the *ṭarīqat* as much as he should so that the lights of truth are revealed to him commensurate with his efforts. Nasafi in this regard said:

> "O *Dervish*! He who accepts what his prophet has said is of the *sharī'at* and he who performs what his prophet has performed is of the *ṭarīqat* and he who sees what his prophet has seen is of *ḥaqq* (truth)."[96]

And Rumi in *Mathnawi* said:

> "*Sharī'at* is like a candle, it kindles the way, without acquiring a light, the path cannot be traversed. As you enter the way your wayfaring is *ṭarīqat*. And, when you reach the destination that is the *ḥaqq* (truth)."[97]

VII: Who is a mystic (*'ārif*)?

An *'ārif* is a person who arrives at a knowledge of truth (as it is) through intuition and spiritual illumination and inspiration. He is submerged and deeply involved and engaged in divine affairs and matters. He is committed and dedicated to the commands and decrees of religion (*sharī'at*) and has merged sharī'at and ḥaqīqat. A real mystic is one who has passed from the stage of certainty (*'ilm al-yaqīn*) and conviction of knowledge to the stage and level of conviction by perception and insight (*'ayn al-yaqīn*) and beyond to the certainty of truth (*ḥaqq al-yaqīn*).[98] He has passed from the stage of

mental awakening and repentance. He has gained understanding to the stage of grace and awareness experienced in His Presence. He has undergone obliteration and found revival in the Lord. A true mystic is also one who performs prayers, purges his ego, and experiences religiously allowed rigorous ascetic exercises not from fear of hell, nor for love of paradise and not as extraordinary wondrous acts. Rather, he has God in mind in all this and nothing and no one else, as the Holy Qur'ān says:

> "My prayers and my devotions, my life and my death, are all for Allah."[99]

The Lion of Truth Imam Ali in lecture 184(*Sifat al-Mottaqin*) of the *Nahj al-Balaghih* explains who is a true mystic (*'arif*):

"The God-fearing are people of distinction. Their speech is 'to the point', their dress is modest, and their gait is humble. They keep their eyes closed to what Allah has made unlawful for them, and they strain their ears to gain that knowledge which is beneficial for them. They remain in the time of trials, as they remain in comfort. If there had not been fixed periods of life ordained for each, their spirits would not have remained in their bodies even for the twinkling of an eye, because of their eagerness for the reward, and for fear of chastisement if they live a long life full of (possible) sins. The greatness of the Creator is always in their hearts, and everything else appears small in their eyes. Thus, they see, and are enjoying Paradise's favors. For them, they also see, and feel the punishment of Hell.

Their hearts grieve, they protect themselves against evil, their bodies are thin, their needs are scanty, and their souls are chaste. They endure hardship for a short while, and consequently, they secure comfort for a long time. It is a beneficial transaction that Allah made easy for them. The world aimed at them, but they did not aim at it. It captured them, but they freed themselves from it by paying a ransom.

During the night they are upstanding on their feet, reading portions of the Qur'an in a well-measured way, creating through it grief for themselves and seeking by it the cure of their ailments. If they come across a verse creating eagerness (for Paradise) they pursue it avidly, and their spirits turn towards it eagerly, and they feel as it is in front of them. And when they come across a verse which contains fear (of Hell) they bend the ears of their hearts towards it, and feel as though the sound of Hell and its cries are reaching their ears. They bend themselves from their backs, prostrate themselves on their foreheads, their palms, their knees, and their toes, and beseech Allah, the Sublime, for their deliverance. During the day they are enduring, learned, virtuous and God-fearing. Fear (of Allah) has made them thin like arrows. Of anyone looks at them he believes they are sick,

although they are not sick, and he says that they have gone mad. In fact, great concern (i.e. fear) has made them mad.

They are not satisfied with their meager good acts, and do not regard their major acts as great. They always blame themselves and are afraid of their deeds. When anyone of them is spoken of highly, he says: "I know myself better than others, and my Lord knows me better than I know. O' Allah do not deal with me according to what they say, and make me better than they think of me and forgive me (those shortcomings) which they do not know."

The character of anyone of them is that you will see that he has strength in religion, determination along with leniency, faith with conviction, eagerness in (seeking) knowledge in forbearance, moderation in riches, devotion in worship, gracefulness in starvation, endurance in hardship, desire for the lawful, pleasure in guidance and hatred from greed. He performs virtuous deeds but still feels afraid. In the evening he is anxious to offer thanks (to Allah). In the morning his anxiety is to remember (Allah). He passes the night in fear and rises in the morning in joy—fear lest the night is passed in forgetfulness, and joy over the favor and mercy received by him. if his self refuses to endure a thing which it does not like he does not grant its request towards what he likes. The coolness of his eye lies in what is to last forever, while from the things (of this world) that will not last he keeps aloof. He transfuses knowledge with forbearance, and speech with action.

You will see his hopes simple, his shortcomings few, his heart fearing, his spirit contented, his meal small and simple, his religion safe, his desires dead and his anger suppressed. Good alone is expected from him. Evil from him is not to be feared. Even if he is found among those who forget (Allah) he is counted among those who remember (Him) but if he is among the rememberers he is not counted among the forgetful. He forgives him who is unjust to him, and he gives to him who deprives him. He behaves well with him who behaves ill with him.

Indecent speech is far from him, his utterance is lenient, his evils are non-existent, his virtues are ever present, his good is ahead and mischief has turned its face (from him). He is dignified during calamities, patient in distresses, and thankful during ease. He does not commit excess over him whom he hates, and does not commit sin for the sake of him whom he loves. He admits truth before evidence is brought against him. he does not misappropriate what is placed in his custody, and does not forget what he is required to remember. He does not call others bad names, he does not cause harm to his neighbor, he does not feel happy at others misfortunes, he does not enter into wrong and does not go out of right.

If he is silent his silence does not grieve him, if he laughs he does not raise his voice, and if he is wronged he endures till Allah takes revenge on

his behalf. His own self is in distress because of him, while the people are in ease with him. He puts himself in hardship for the sake of his next life, and makes people feel safe from himself. His keeping away from others is by way of ascetism and punfication, and his nearness by way of deceit and cheating."

The term *'ārif* has been defined variously. It has been given different meanings from differing angles, view and attitudes. Some have differentiated between *'ārif* and Sufi but we have ignored such distinctions in this study. However, the following definitions are commonplace in the literature.

1) Avicenna (d. 1037) says that an *'ārif* is one:

"Who has turned away his conscience, or heart and mind from all things except God and has opened up his inner being to the sacred and holy world so that the light of truth (God) may shine and become reflected in it."[100]

2) Junayd (d. 910) says:

"Taṣawwuf (mysticism) is picking and screening . . . and anyone who is cut off or separated from all that is not of God, is a Sufi."[101]

3) Junayd also says:

"A Sufi is one whose heart, like that of Abraham, is safe from love of this world; who performs God's commands as Abraham and submits him self to His Will as Abraham and Ishmael; whose grief is such as David's, whose 'poverty' is like that of Christ, whose patience is that of Job; whose enthusiasm be like that of Moses and whose sincerity be as that of Muḥammad."[102]

*'arif*s often trace their spiritual and initiatic lineage back to the Prophet through his family, especially the first eight Shi'i Imams.

VIII: The goal of mysticism as distinct from practical reason and philosophy

1. The aims of an *'ārif* or mystic are severance and separation from everything and all things that are not of God, purification, abstraction of the soul, dissolution in God (*maḥw*) and revival by Him (*baqā'*).

2. Mystic conduct is active whereas ethical conduct is static. In *'irfān* the various steps and stages and the beginning and ending of each 'journey' receives particular attention with respect to one's deeds and conduct.
3. Ethical acts embellish one's soul without order or discipline, whereas in *'irfān* ethical factors assume a dialectic form.
4. The spiritual elements in ethics are limited to some meanings and practices of movement and conduct. Discussions are often held with respect to states and intuitional revelations that are the *sālik*'s exclusively and of which others are unaware.
5. The objective of the philosopher is to turn the worldly man into an intellectual being, but the mystic wants to reach the core of truth, which is God and to witness His presence. The philosopher finds perfection in understanding. The *'ārif* finds it in reaching (to the ultimate truth).
6. A philosopher's tools are reason, logic, argument and proof. An *'ārif*'s tools are his heart, diligence, purification, inner effort and movement.[103]

Shabistari says:

> "Arguments of reason may all be jewels and gems. Yet, the pleasures of the heart are surely something else."[104]

7. The mystic seeks God and prays and praises the Lord for no reason except that He is worthy of praise.[105]

IX: What is wayfaring (*sulūk*)?

'Irfān is ever concerned with man's conscience, the core of his being and heart. *Sulūk*, which means walking, has a particular meaning in mystical terminology. Physical walking with the legs is not what is intended. *Sulūk* means entrance of the mind and the heart into the world within, into the world unknown, the invisible world.

Sulūk indicates 'going' generally. The walker may make physical journeys or he may make trips to the realms of the mind or the heart. To the *'arif*'s or mystics, *sulūk* means a special going:[106] moving or going towards God, and moving or traversing within the Divine Realm. Going to the Lord is finite but moving within Him is infinite.

Sayr or movement towards God implies that the itinerant, the mover, should continue in the path until he ceases to exist as he is and finds

survival in God. In other words, he hears, sees, speaks and knows through the Lord.

Thou art the Path, the Journeyer, and the Destination.

Sayr in God means that when the *sālik* or the aspirant is to meet with the Lord, he finds new life, after submitting his being to Him. By His Will, he shall continue his sayr, or journey of discovery until the time that he can see and know all things in detail as they truly are and that nothing, whatever, on earth, in Heaven or else where in the Almighty's Domain, remains unknown to him.[107] Know that by *sulūk*, the mystics means moving from bad words to worthy argument; from bad deeds to good deeds; from bad conduct to good conduct and from one's own essence and being to that of the Lord.

X: The reality of wayfaring

> "Everyone on it must pass away, and there will endure for ever the person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honor."(Qur'an, 26:55). *(Fana wa Baqa).*

The reality of wayfaring is to overwhelm the body and the soul or self under the banner of faith through the decrees and commands of the fiqh (religious laws and edicts) as pertain to the body and the mind under the Almighty's divine banner. The entirety of the ups and downs of the path, its pursuits, crises and consequences are registered in these stages.[108]

"So when the night overshadowed him, he saw a star; said he: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: "I do not love the setting ones". Then when he saw the moon rising, he said: Is this my Lord? So when it set, he said: if my Lord had not guided me I should certainlt be of the erring people. Then when he saw the sun rising, he said: is this my Lord? Is this the greatest? So when it set, he said: O my people! Surely I am clear of what you set up (with Allah). Surely I have turned myself, being upright, wholly to Him Who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not of the polytheists."(Qur'an, 76-79:6).

Hafiz says:

> From the fire of my heart, my chest in grief fo the Beloved consumed.
> In this house, was a fire, that the house consumed.
> From the famess of the Heart-Ravisher (*Dilbar*), my body melted.
> From the love's fire of the Beloved's face, my spirit consumed.

XI: Intention (*niyyat*) in *sulūk*

> "Actions are judged by their intention."[109]

The declaration of intention, that is, a deliberate, conscious, and willful undertaking of *sulūk* is extremely important. Fiqh has decreed the enunciation of the intention to ensure that religious rituals like daily prayers are correct and acceptable. However, in mystical knowledge, every act and deed of man whether the compulsory ones, or the recommended acts, should express as their intention nearness to God. The *sālik*'s wish behind his declared intentions should not be a request for material well-being, it should not be a request for knowledge and gnosis; it should not be a request, a wish to be human and have all human values and grades developed in him. For, if this is realised, all the above wishes shall be granted, even things that the sālik has not dreamed of.[110]

XII: Aspects of *sulūk*

Sulūk consists of the following qualities: silence (*samt*), abstinence (or hunger), seclusion (*khalvat*), wakefulness (*yaqẓa*), nocturnal devotion or vigilance (*tahajjud*). The elders or authorities of 'Irfan, hold that *sulūk* is based on four pillars: frugal consumption, saying little, sleeping little, and staying in seclusion from people.[111]

Samt or silence is of two types. General silence is keeping one's tongue from all that is unnecessary and talking only when necessary and avoiding speech in excess of what is necessary. It is to avoid talk that is not of God. Such silence must be maintained at all times. The *aḥādīth* (traditions) and narratives indicate this type of silence. According to one *ḥadīth*:

> "Silence is the motto of the lovers. It pleases God. Silence is the practice of the prophets and the elite."

Special silence safeguards one's tongue in talking with people or with non-initiates in the absolute and, in this sense it is regarded as a necessary condition in all exclusively theological recitals.[112] This category is silence by the heart, that is, keeping silence for the sake of what is not of God.[113] Thus he who is silent by the tongue has lightened his burden. But he who keeps silent by word and heart, seek him for Almighty God has made His Will manifest in him.

He, whose tongue is not silent but is silent in his heart, is a speaker in terms of *ḥikmat* (wisdom). He, who will not keep silent in words or in his heart, is possessed by the devil. Silence by the tongue is only the goal of the masses. Silence of the heart is an attribute of those who are near to the Lord and they are men of perception, insight and vision.

> "There is no worship like silence
> He remains safe who remains silent."[114]

Hunger (or abstinence) is also of two types, deliberate and of constraint. Deliberate abstinence belongs to the peripatetics. Abstinence of constraint is that of the searchers. A *muḥaqqiq* or seeker does not hold the soul in hunger but his food intake is little. Hunger in any condition and for any reason it may be, is the strength of a *sālik*'s claim and reveals great things to the seekers (of truth). Abstinence has states and stages such as humility, respect, courtesy, mendacity absence of excess, quiescence of limbs and destruction or eradication of unworthy memories. Such are the states and stages of abstinence of the walkers of the Path.

But the abstinence or hunger of the *muhaqqaqin* or seekers is sympathy, serenity, fellowship, non-being and purification from human characteristics. It is divine seclusion from the veils of time, a most sublime status namely, *ṣamadānī*, an attribute of God meaning absolute lack of want and need but wanted and needed by everything and everyone, a status that contains secrets and revelations.[115] It is better that abstinence be observed in such a way as not to weaken the sālik's conduct and upset the mind and heart. In this connection, Imam al-Sādiq ('A) has said:

> "Abstinence insures the believer's constant progression, it is food for the soul and nourishment for the heart."[116]

> "Hunger is a great aid to refresh the soul and to break habits."[117]

There are two types of seclusion (*khalvat*), general and private. General seclusion (also called withdrawal) is staying away from all that is not of God, especially from such people who are sinful and seekers of this world. Association with these groups or individuals is permissible only to the extent that it is absolutely necessary. Association with the chaste, the faithful does not negate such seclusion. The words of the Immaculate Shi'i Imams indicate that this is the type of seclusion that must be observed. As Imam Husayn ('A) has said,

> "There never was a prophet, messenger or apostle who did not go into seclusion at one time or other, in the beginning, during or at the end of his life."[118]

The occasional retiring of the Prophet to the Cave at Hira is an indication of this type of seclusion. At any rate, this is the preferred variety of seclusion. Private seclusion implies being alone and staying away from upsetting noises. It calls for remembrance of God and saying prayers in isolation in an enclosure not much larger than the, sālik himself. The place should be clean and lawfully occupied and it is better that it have no window. This

type of seclusion is observed and recommended by certain elders, if not by all, who perform recital exercises in remembrance of God.[119]

Solitude is of two kinds. The solitude (*'uzlat*) of the devotees is observed by avoidance of physical association with others. The solitude of the seekers (*muhaqqaqin*) is the exercise of the heart in avoiding all things and objects and keeping the heart free and open only to God and His Knowledge. This leads to awareness of the Lord and to the divine secrets of the oneness of God. Seclusion and solitude purge the sālik of any non-divine trait or impediment. Seclusion and solitude afford the seekers (of the Lord) the highest standing and opportunity for intuitive knowledge of God and for witnessing His Presence.[120]

Wakefulness (or sleeping a little) refers to the alertness of the mind and heart and it is either through the eyes staying open, or by the heart being on the alert. Alertness of the heart means putting an end to being negligent, remiss and heedless and to seek and ask for divine perception. Wakefulness of the eyes means remaining in the wakeful state with eyes open to beseech for the alertness and vigilance of the mind and heart. Know that action of the heart is void with eyes close (negligence of watchfulness). If the *sālik* keeps a vigilant heart with his eyes closed, he shall witness the alertness and the watchfulness of his eyes.[121]

Therefore, the fruit of wakefulness will be the perpetuation of the heart's action and ascension of the *sālik* to exalted places that are reserved for the Lord. The state of wakefulness is to maintain and cherish those states that befall the *sālik* or are bestowed upon him as he advances toward his goal. The searcher or seeker (*muḥaqqiq*) enjoys divine qualities through the wakeful stage.

As for nocturnal devotion or vigilance (*tahajjud*), the holy Qur'ān says:

> "Pray during the latter part of the night, an additional duty for which your Lord may exalt you to a position of praise and glory."[122]

It is recommended that the *sālik* spend half the night, or a third, or two thirds in prayers and devotion. The Qur'ānic verse which is addressed to the Prophet confirms this as we read:

> "O you who are wrapped up in your mantle, rise to pray by night except a little, half the night or little less or little more."[123]

There have been eager *sālik*'s who did not let up on their nocturnal devotions until daybreak and so were able to say the Morning Prayer with the ablution they had for evening prayers. Shaykh Abu Tālib al-Makkī (d. 996)

has mentioned the names of forty such men, followers of the Prophet in the book named Qut al-qulub (Nourishment of the hearts).[124] It is recommended that nocturnal devotions take no less than one-sixth of the night time. Know that staying up at night is by Divine Grace and not merely the act of a seeker going in search of his beloved.[125] The light of love for getting up at night shall not be kindled in a sālik's heart unless the real Beloved has first made itself manifest in the heart of the believer. When the heart receives such inkling, the willing soul is awakened and in all honour and ecstasy stands in prayer before the Creator of all goodness and asks relief from the agony of separation of lovers and the Beloved.[126]

Shaykh's who achieved spiritual states, all observed nocturnal vigilance. One can find many references to the excellence of *tahajjud* or nocturnal devotion, in the rising at nights to spend time in prayers of supplication in numerous Qur'ānic verses and traditions.[127] It is related that the most despicable men in the eyes of God are those who lie down like corpses all night and waste their days in loafing.[128] Therefore, *tahajjud* means wakefulness as the Holy Qur'ān directs night prayers, prayers of supplication, repentance, remembrance of God, reckoning with the self and reprimanding it. These are some of the major rites and exercises of *'irfān*.

XIII: The Four Journeys in Mysticism

Journeys are of various types in mysticism. There is the physical journey which the sālik or walker along the Path undertakes. Then there are the inner journeys and journeys that imply a beginning and an end with superior destinations. These moral or spiritual journeys are divided into four journeys, each of which is endowed with very subtle points. The depth of 'irfān and its *sayr* and *sulūk* rest in these journeys. We shall not analyse them here in any detail but merely mention the most concise text concerning the four divine journeys:

"Know that four journeys exist for the seekers among the mystics and divine authorities. These are the journey from men towards God, journeying along with the Lord within Him. The third journey is the opposite of the first, it is from God to man with God and the fourth journey is in some respects opposite to the second for it is journeying with God among men."[129]

The first journey is devoted to the removal of all curtains or veils of darkness and light and entering the world of matter, the Heavens and the Lord's divine domain. The second journey is passing through the world of spirit. However, the third journey, the journey from God to man is superior to the second journey because the latter is *sukr* or intoxication in reaching God and disappearing in Him, which when achieved, the sālik finds new life in the Lord and by his eyes, and through every means. In this fourth

journey, he sees and perceives the entire world of matter and Heaven and witnesses the grandeur of the Divine Domain of Power and Majesty and imparts knowledge of actions, attributes and of essence.[130]

XIV: *'Urafa's* character and conduct

The most significant feature of the *'Urafa* or mystics is their behaviour or conduct which consists of patience, humility, advice, sympathy, kindness, moderation, devotion, service, fellowship, joy, generosity, compassion, friendliness, pardon, munificence, fidelity, decency, affection, cheerfulness, calmness, prayer, good temperament, soothed ego, respect for brothers, honoring the elders, mercy toward minors and adults, belittling the ego of himself and rating high all that comes unto him.[131] The Prophet said:

> "I have been sent down to destroy bad habits and teach proper conduct to the servants (of God)."[132]

In his counsel to Mu'ādh ibn Jabal, the Prophet in fact compiled all good and proper conduct as he says and ruled out improper conduct:

> "O Mu'ādh! Practice chastity and virtue, be truthful in word and action, fulfil promises and return to the owner all that has been left with you in trust. Avoid treason and observe neighbourliness; have mercy and compassion for orphans", talk softly and offer greetings, do good and to not seek plenty. Treat this world with disdain but cherish the next. Beware the Day of Reckoning. Try, O Mu'ādh, not to curse the patient and the meek. Make sure you commit no sin; repent immediately if you do and continue in a state of repentance. Know that Almighty God admits those of His servants to His Presence who are equipped with these qualities."

In regards to the characters of the 'Arif, Imam Ali says in the *Nahj al-Balaghih*, (short speeches 325):

> "A believer has a cheerful face, a sorrowful heart, a very broad chest (full of generosity), and a very humble heart. He hates high position and dislikes renown. His grief is long his courage is far reaching, his silence is much and, his time is occupied. He is grateful, enduring, buried in his thoughts, sparing in his friendship (with others), of bright demeanor and of soft temperament. He is stronger than stone but humbler than a slave."

These are some of the qualities that an *'arif* must possess:

1. Humility

An 'arif's best quality is his humility. He who entertains humility in his heart can benefit by it all the time. He will be at ease in his association with others and others will be comfortable when dealing with him. The Prophet of God, in spite of his glorious status, set examples of humility by darning his own clothes and shoes with his own hands. He sat down and spoke with the poor, the orphaned and aided them. Bāyazīd Bisṭāmī (d. 875) said:

> A man is humble who belittles his own ego and holds it at the lowest level and regards himself as the worse and lowliest living creature.

2. Moderation and Leniency

Another characteristic of an *'arif* is moderation and leniency, forbearance and toleration of others. The Prophet never said an unkind word to anyone. He never derided a food (put before him), nor did he punish a servant. It must be born in mind that the general moderation that people observe is a *'Irfani* characteristic. It is said that everything has and essence. Man's essence is reason and patience is reason's essence. The proof of a man's reason is his tolerance of the pains and hardships inflicted on him by others and also courteous treatment of the people which purges the ego of impurities and palliates mulishness and quick anger. It is recorded in a *ḥadīth* (tradition) that he who enjoys being lenient most shall reap more benefits.

3. Sacrifice

Another quality of the *'Urafa* is their readiness for sacrifice. Sacrifice generates from a powerful sense of compassion and mercy. It implies the strength of the soul to give away an only available object in sacrifice to others. It also implies patience and independence. *Abu Hafs Suhrawardī* (d. 1234) said:

> Sacrifice means preferring brothers and friends to oneself in all affairs of this and of the other world, so that there is no distinction among blood brothers, relatives, and friends.

4. Pardon or Forgiveness

Pardoning of others is another *'Irfani* trait. Mystics go to the extreme in overlooking the wrongs done to them by others. Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 778) said:

> If you do well to someone who has harmed you, then it can be said that you have done good, for returning good for good is the work of tradesmen.

The Prophet said:

> "To do good means to pardon the cruelty of other's to yourself and to make up with and join him who severs his ties with you and to be generous to him who withholds things from you."

5. Cheerfulness

Good-naturedness and cheerfulness are other *'Irfani* characteristics. It warms the hearts and pleases others. Their joyfulness is a sign of the light of their hearts. As Almighty Allah says in Qur'an:

> . . . There shall be beaming faces, smiling and cheerful.[133]

6. Indulgence

Another of the qualities of the mystic is that he is opposed to formalism and fastidiousness in his manner and conduct. A condition for this is imitation of the Prophet in softness of speech and joviality. The prophet once said:

> "I do not make jokes and do not utter anything except the truth."

Taking things hard or being hard to please is bad in everything including dress, food, reception of guests, in asking questions, in speech and in all other things pertaining to this world.

7. Generosity (*Infāq*)

Infāq is another specified characteristic of the 'Urafa. Hoarding is abhorent because the 'arif sees himself as residing by the seaside. He considers that divine blessings shall remain with him indefinitely, and if one who lives by the sea takes to hoarding water he will be open to ridicule and accused of ignorance. The Prophet says:

> "Each day two angels make the following declamation: "O Lord bless him with plenty who is busy performing charitable deeds and destroy the assets and holdings of him who is miserly and withholds things from the people."

8. Contentment

The Master of the Faithful and Preceptor of seekers, Imam 'Alī ('A) said:

> "Contentment is a blade that never becomes blunt."

Dhu l-Nun al-Misrī (d. 859) said:

> He who exercises contentment shall be free of and at peace with the people and shall gain superiority and excellence over his peers.

9. Putting Off Enmity and Anger

An *'arif* must purge himself of all feelings of anger and animosity. There should be no such feelings in an *'arif's* heart toward anything or anyone. Such feelings should be replaced by spiritual qualities in an *'arif*. The Messenger of God has said:

> "Power and might do not consist in overwhelming someone by force. Mighty is he who controls his feelings of anger."

10. Peacemaking

The *'arif* is able and willing to make peace, to agree with and befriend others and to give up a feud. The Lord has described His Messenger's Apostles in these words:

> "Let them be hard on Our enemies but lenient and merciful to Our friends."

11. Proper Gratefulness

When a *sālik* is first developed into a fountainhead for monotheism, he loses all beings in Almighty God. He sees the Lord as the source of all generosity and prohibitions. As he proceeds and develops farther and reaches monotheism in its pure and absolute form, he finds the proof and

reason for divine bestowals and withholdings. He sees the cause first and next the effect and such awareness and knowledge are gained by insight. The *sālik* will then offer thanks first to the Benefactor, the Absolute Donor and then to the Cause that has acted as intermediate. It is recorded in a *ḥadīth* that the first and foremost group of people to be invited to Heaven shall be the thankful ones, those who are grateful in prosperity in hardship, in sorrow and in joy.

12. Status and Dignity

Whenever a *sālik* has knowledge and is aware of the blights of ego it maybe that he confers of what he has to assist friends and uses his status and wealth to improve and reform relations. A man's integrity comes to a test in four things: interdiction, charity, honour and lowliness.[134]

XV: Love

> "O belivers, whoever from among you turns back from his religion, then Allah will bring a people [instead of you] whom He loves them, and they love Him." (Qur'an, 54: 5).

Love is the main gate to the city of God for many Islamic mystical orders specially Safavid and Mawlawi orders (See on Shaykh Safi al-Din Ardebili point of view on love: Ibn Bazaz, *Safat al—Safa*, p.515, 543-549, Rumi, *Divane Shams*, *Mathnawi*).

The basis and cause of love is beauty. Allah is absolute beauty. He is beautiful and he loves beauty.

Love is the engine for *souluk*/spiritual journey, without which the journey is impossible. By love the *salik* flies towards the Divine world; and the path of Love is better than any other path. Love makes the heart of the *salik* clean and soft. Love helps the *salik* leave behind and overtake his egoism faster than other traditions. Love purifies and filters the heart. The world of the one who is drunken by divine wine is the world of love. When the *'arif* reaches the world of love, the drunkenness of love becomes visible. The spirit is the palace of love because it is from the Divine world. When the 'arif is familiarised with the Divine love, his heart files with him, hence there is no place for anything else. "When the *'arif* enters the sea of love, his outside and inside becomes love, for when the *'ashiq*/lover sees himself, he sees love and also when he sees love itself, he sees the *ma'ashuq*/ beloved."[135]. For the *'arif* loves the Creator hence he loves both the creation and the universe. The *'arif* reaches peace and tranquillity by love. Love is the physician for all illnesses and disorders. It is the cure for

all of the soul's sicknesses such as selfishness, egoism, greed, jealousy, envy, pride, anger and lust. According to Rumi Love is the astrolabe of God's secretes. It means by love we reach certain type of knowledge which is not reachable by particular reason.

The signs of the love of Allah according to Ghazzali in *the Alchemy of Happiness*-Fourth *Rukn*, Ninth Principle:

> Know that love is a dear treasure, and the claim of love is easy, so that humans think that they are of the lovers. But there are signs and reasons to love, and humans must desire these of themselves, which are seven.
>
> The first sign is that the lover of Allah does not hate death, for no friend hates meeting a friend. And the Prophet said "whoever loves meeting Allah, the exalted, Allah, also loves meeting him.", and *Boyuti* said to one of the ascetics "Do you love death?" the ascetic paused in answering, he (*Boyuti*) said "if you were truthful you would have loved it." But it is permissible for one to be a lover, and hate the hastening of death, not death itself. And the sign was that he was restless in making provisions.
>
> The second sign is that the lover of Allah, sacrifices for his beloved, and should cleave to what he knows brings him closer to God, and should avoid what places him at a distance. The fact of a person sinning is not proof that he does not love God, but his love is not with all the heart. The great Sufi Fudhail said to a certain man, "If anyone asks you whether you love God, keep silent; for if you say, 'I do not love Him, 'you are an infidel; and if you say, 'I do' your deeds contradict you."
>
> The third sign is that the remembrance and invocation of God should always remain fresh in one's heart without effort, for one abundantly remembers what one loves, and if one's love is complete he will never forget it. So if the heart is forced into remembrance, it is feared that his beloved is that which its remembrance is dominant in his heart. While the love of Allah is not dominant, however the love of his love is dominant that he wishes to love. And love is one thing and the love of love is another
>
> The fourth sign is that he loves the Qur'an, which is His word, and the Prophet (Mohammad) and whatever is related to him. And when love gains strength, he will love all human beings, for all are God's servants, but his loves will embrace all beings, for they are created by Him. As whoever loves anyone, loves his compositions and his handwriting.

The fifth sign is that he will be covetous of spiritual retreat and supplication and will long for the approach of night and the obstacles are removed, so that he may supplicate with the Friend. If he loves conversation by day and sleep at night more that the spiritual retreat, then his love is weak. A revelation came to David that, "O David, do not become intimate with any one; for except two kinds of people none are separated from me: those who are earnest in seeking reward and turns lazy when the reward comes late, and he who forgets Me and is content with himself. The sign of being separated form me is that I leave him on his own, and leave him amused in the material world" If love is complete all else is excluded

In the children of Israel there was a worshipper who prayed at night, and did his prayer under a tree on which a bird sang beautifully. A revelation came to the Prophet to go and say to him, "Thou hast mingled the love of a melodious bird with the love of Me; thy rank among the saints is lowered." On the other hand, some have loved God with such intensity that, while they were engaged in devotion, their houses have caught fire and they have not noticed it.

The sixth sign is that worship becomes easy to him and its hardship is removed for him. One said, "During twenty years I performed my night prayers with great difficulty, then in twenty years I enjoyed them." When love is strong no joy is equal to the joy of worship, for how can it be hard?

The seventh sign is that he loves his servants who are obedient to him and is merciful and compassionate to them, and hates all the disbelievers and the disobedient, as it (the Qur'an) says: "They are strenuous against the unbelievers and merciful to each other." One of the prophets once asked. "O God, who are Thy saints and lovers?" and the answer came, "Those who as a child is infatuated by his mother, are infatuated by me, as a bird seeks refuge in it's nest, take refuge in My remembrance, and as a leopard who fears naught becomes angry, they become angry when one sins."

These signs and the like of them are numerous and those whose love is complete have all these signs, and those who have some of these signs, their love is also to that extent.

Rumi says the following in regards to love:

"Choose the love of that Living One who is everlasting, who gives thee to drink of the wine that increases life.

Choose the love of Him from whose love all the prophets gained power and glory.

Do not say, "We have no admission to that king." Dealings with the generouse are not difficult." (Mathnawi, book1, verses: 219-221).

"Love is the All-subdeure, and I am sudeued by love: by Love's bitterness I have been made sweet as suger.

O fierce Wind, before Thee I am (but) a straw: how can I know where I shall fall?

Whether I am (stout as) Bilal or (thin as) the new moon, I am runinning on and following the course of Thy sun.

What has the moon to do with stoutness and thinness? She runs at the heels of the sun, like a shadow.

The lovers have fallen into a fierce torrent: they see their hearts on the ordinance of love.

Like the millstone turning, day and night, in revolution and maoning incessantly.

Its turning is evidence for those who seek the River; least any one should say that the River is montionless.

If you do not see the hidden River, see the turning of the celestial water-wheel.

Since the heavens have no rest from Him (Love), thou, O heart, like a star, seek no rest.

See the giddy wind howling; see the billows surging at His command."(Mathnawi, book six, verses: 902-905, 910-914 and 918).

Hafiz says:

"With the love's eye one can behold the face of our Beloved.
The sea of love is a sea which there is no shore for it.
There the lover should be drowned; he should submit himself to Him."

The assistance of the traveller on the path to God is by the love not by the reason; reason is not capable to lead the traveller to the unity of God.

Qushayri in chapter Love of *Al-Risala* said that the Messenger of God said:

"Whoever loves to meet God, God, too, will love to meet him; and whoever does not love to meet Him, God, too, will not love to meet him."

XVI: The Stages and Journeys of *suluk*

We conclude this paper with a discussion of the stages of the Path. The *sālik* (seeker) goes through numerous states, positions and waystations from the beginning to the end of his procession toward God.[136] There are various views regarding the number of such stages. Shaykh Mahmud Shabistarī (d. 1337), says in his book, the *Gulshan-i rāz* (The Rose garden of secrets):

"Two steps to a sālik's path
But nine perils they contain
Loss of identity comes first
Next to cross the wilderness
Known as life's domain."

However, prominent mystics contend these positions are seven. Abu Nasr al-Sarrāj (d. 988), in his authoritative book *al-Luma'*, discusses seven stages, namely, repentance, abstinence, asceticism, mendicancy, patience, trust, resignation or consent.[137] In his *Manṭiq al-Ṭayr* (Language of the birds), Farīd al-dīn 'Attār (d. ca. 1221) considers the following stages: begging, love, knowledge, independence, monotheism, mendicancy and annihilation (*fanā*) or ceasing to exist. The highest figure for a *sālik's* positions and stages provided in the books Ṣad Maydān (One hundred Fields)[138] and *Manāzil Al-Sā'irīn* (Stations of the wayfarers),[139] by Khwāja 'Abd Allāh Ansārī (d. 1089) is one hundred as follow: *Al-Bidayat*/The Beginning, *Alabwab*/The Doors, *Al-Muamilat*/The Bargains, *Al-Akhlaq*/The Morals, *Al-Usul*/The Principles, *Al-Audiya*/The Valleys, *Al-Ahwal*/The States, *Al-Walaya*The Guardianships, *Al-Haqayeq*/The Realities, *Al-Nihaya*/The Extremities.[140] The main reason for this discrepancy lies in the mystics' elaborations or in their summarizing or in the differences of their statuses and points of destination. Or, they may each have posed the issue from a different view.

"From the expanse of oneness
A word was heard, saying:
"I am the Lord"
Another went by distance covered
By boats near and far
Yet another remarked
Of the tress, the mole and line Of the Beloved by candle and wine
When destination came to the fore
Men of understanding reasoned no more."[141]

Finally, we conclude our short paper and shorter excursus on mystic states with a summary of the states, stages and waystations that a sālik must go through as given in Suhrawardī's *Adāb al-murīdīn*:

1- Awakening (*intibāh*) from the torpor of neglect.
2- Repentance (*tawba*), which is returning from all that is not of God after having gone astray and to maintain a state of constant repentance.
3- *Inābat* is going back to the remembrance of God. Some have said that repentance is by fear and *inābat* is by desire and choice. A third group maintains that repentance is external and *inābat* is internal.
4- Wara'a is foregoing something about which a doubt has risen. It means abstinence and self-restraint.
5- Taking stock of oneself and examining one's soul (*muḥāsabat al-nafs*), reflecting upon one's actions.
6- Sincerity implies tolerance of pain and forsaking comfort.
7- Renunciation (*zuhd*) is turning away from things that are permissible or religiously sanctioned and to guide or re-channel the desires and passions.
8- Mendacity (*faqr*) involves absence of self and property and removing from the heart all that leaves the hand.
9- Truthfulness (*ṣidq*), both external and internal.
10- *Taṣṣabur*, or tolerance is forbearance of bitterness and these are the final positions or stages of the novitiates (*murīdān*).
11- Patience (*ṣabr*) that relinquishes complaints.
12- Submission is the enjoyment of mishap.
13- *Ikhlāṣ* (sincerity) implies forcing men out of the Lord's business.
14- Resignation or trust (*tawakkul*) means relying upon Him, who destroys lust for all except Him. [142]

Chapter Two

Shi'ism and Sufism: their Relationship in Essence and in History

Seyyed Hossein Nasr
George Washington University, USA.

Abstract

One of the most difficult questions touching the manifestation of Sufism in Islamic history is its relation with Shi'ism. In discussing this intricate and somewhat complex relationship, in principle and essence or in the light of its metahistorical reality as well as in time and history, we need hardly concern ourselves with the too-often repeated criticism made by certain orientalists who would doubt the Islamic and Quranic character of both Shi'ism and Sufism. Basing themselves on a *priori* assumption that Islam is not a revelation and that even if it ranks as a religion, it is only an elementary 'religion of the sword' intended for a simple desert people, these would-be critics brush aside as un-Islamic all that speaks of gnosis (*'irfan*) and esotericism, pointing to the lack of historical texts in the early period as proof of their thesis, as if the non-existent in it self could disprove the existence of something which may have been there without leaving a written trace for us to dissect and analyse today. The reality of Shi'ism and Sufism as integral aspects of the Islamic revelation is too dazzlingly clear to be ignored or explained away on the basis of a tendentious historical argument. The fruit is there to prove that the tree has its roots in a soil that nourishes it; and the spiritual fruit can only be borne by a tree whose roots are sunk in a revealed truth. To deny this most evident of truths would be as if one were to doubt the Christian sanctity of St Francis of Assisi because the historical records of the first years of the Apostolic succession are not documented to fit academic standards. What the presence of St Francis proves is in reality the opposite fact, namely, that the Apostolic succession must be real even if no historical records are at hand. The same holds true *mutatis mutandis* for Shi'ism and Sufism. In this essay we will in any case begin by taking for granted the Islamic character of Shi'ism and Sufism as covered previously elsewhere and upon this basis

we can delve into their relationship[143]. In fact Shi'ism and Sufism are both, in different ways and on different levels, intrinsic aspects of Islamic orthodoxy, this term being taken not merely in its theological sense but more especially in its universal sense as tradition and universal truth contained within a revealed form.

The relationship between Shi'ism and Sufism is complicated by the fact that in discussing these two spiritual and religious realities we are not dealing with the same level or dimension of Islam in both cases. Islam has both an exoteric (*zahir*) and an esoteric (*batin*) dimension, which along with all their inner divisions represent the 'vertical' structure of the revelation. But it is also divided into Sunnism and Shi'ism, which one might say represent its 'horizontal' structure.[144] Were this the only aspect of the above relationship it would be relatively simple to explain. But as a matter of fact the esoteric dimension of Islam, which in the Sunni climate is almost totally connected with Sufism, in one way or another colour the whole structure of Shi'ism in both its esoteric and even its exoteric aspect. One can say that Islamic esotericism or gnosis crystallized into the form of Sufism in the Sunni world while it poured into the whole structure of Shi'ism especially during its early period.[145] From the Sunni point of view Sufism presents similarities to Shi'ism and has even assimilated aspects thereof. No less an authority than Ibn Khaldun writes: 'The Sufis thus became saturated with Shi'ah theories. (Shi'ah) theories entered so deeply into their religious ideas that they based their own practice of using a cloak (*khirqah*) on the fact that 'Ali clothed al—Hasan al—Basri in such a cloak and caused him to agree solemnly that he would adhere to the mystic path. (The tradition thus inaugurated by 'Ali) was continued according to the Sufis, through al-Junayd, one of the Sufi *shaykhs*.'[146] From the Shi'ite point of view Shi'ism is the origin of what later came to be known as Sufism. But here by Shi'ism is meant the esoteric instructions of the Prophet, the *asrar* which many Shi'te authors have identified with the Shi'ite 'concealment', *taqiyyah*.

Each of these two points of view presents an aspect of the same reality but seen within two worlds that are contained in the bosom of the total orthodoxy of Islam. That reality is Islamic esotericism or gnosis. If we take Sufism and Shi'ism in their historical manifestation in later periods, then neither Shi'ism nor Sunnism, nor Sufism within the Sunni world, derive from one another. They all derive their authority from the Prophet and the source of the Islamic revelation. But if we mean by Shi'ism Islamic esotericism as such, then it is of course inseparable from Sufism. For example, the Shi'ite Imams play a fundamental role in Sufism, but as representatives of Islamic esotericism, not as specifically Shi'ite Imams according to the later organization of the Shi'ite faith. In fact there is a tendency among both later Muslim historians and modern scholars to read back into the first two centuries the clear

distinctions that were established only later.[147] It is true that one can discern 'Shi'ite' elements even during the life-time of the Prophet and that Shi'ism and Sunnism have their roots in the very origin of the Islamic revelation, placed there providentially to accommodate different psychological and ethnic types. But the hard-and-fast divisions of later centuries are not discernible in the earlier period. There were Sunni elements with definite Shi'ite tendencies [148], and there were Shi'ite contacts with Sunni elements both intellectually and socially. In certain cases in fact it is difficult to judge as to whether a particular author was Shi'ite or Sunni especially before the fourth / tenth century, although even in this period Shi'ite and Sunni religious and spiritual life each possessed its own particular perfume and colour.

In this less crystallized and more fluid environment, those elements of Islamic esotericism which from the Shi'ite point of view are considered as particularly Shi'ite appear as representing Islamic esotericism as such in the Sunni world. No better instance of this can be found than the person of 'Ali' ibn Abi Talib. Shi'ism may be called the 'Islam of 'Ali, who in Shi'ism is both the 'spiritual' and 'temporal' authority after the Prophet. In Sunnism also nearly all Sufi orders reach back to him and he is the spiritual authority *par excellence* after the Prophet.[149] The famous *hadith* 'I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate', which is a direct reference to the role of 'Ali in Islamic esotericism, is accepted by Shi'ah and Sunni alike, but the 'spiritual vicegerency' (*khilafah ruhaniyyah*) of 'Ali appears to sufism within the Sunni world not as something specifically Shi'ite but as being directly connected with Islamic esotericism in itself.

Yet the case of 'Ali, the reverence in which he is held by Shi'ites and Sufis alike, shows how intimately Shi'ism and Sufism are connected together. Sufism does not possess a *Shari'ah*; it is only a spiritual way (*Tariqah*) attached to a particular Shari'ite rite such as the *Maliki* or *Shafi'I*. Shi'ism possesses both a *Shari'ah* and a *Tariqah*. In its purely spiritual or *Tariqah* aspect it is in many instances identical with Sufism as it exists in the Sunni world, and certain Sufi orders such as the Ni'matullahi have existed in both the Shi'ite and Sunni worlds. But in addition Shi'ism possesses even in its Shari'ite and theological aspects certain esoteric elements which make it akin to Sufism. In fact one could say that Shi'ism, even in its outward aspect, is oriented toward the spiritual stations (*maqamat-i 'irfani*) of the Prophet and the Imams, which are also the goal of the spiritual life in Sufism.

A few examples in the vast and intricate relationship between Shi'ism and Sufism may make more clear some of the points discussed so far. In Islam in general, and Sufism in particular, a saint is called a *wali* (abbreviation of *waliallah* or friend of God) and sanctity is called *wilayah*. As already mentioned in Shi'ism the whole function of the Imam is associated with the power and function of what in Persian is called *walayat*, which comes

from the same root as *wilayah* and is closely connected with it.[150] Some have even identified the two. In any case according to Shi'ism, in addition to the power of prophecy in the sense of bringing a divine law (*nubuwwah* and *risalah*), had the power of spiritual guidance and initiation (*wilayah*) which he transmitted to Fatimah and 'Ali and through them to all the Imams. Since the Imam is always alive, this function and power is also always present in this world and able to guide men to the spiritual life. The 'cycle of initiation' (*da'irat al-wilayah*) which follows the 'cycle of prophecy' (*da'irat al-nubuwwah*) is therefore one that continues to this day and guarantees the ever-living presence of an esoteric way in Islam.[151]

The same meaning pertains to *wilayah* in the sense that it too concerns the ever-living spiritual presence in Islam which enables men to practise the spiritual life and to reach a state of sanctity. That is why many Sufis since the time of Hakim al-Tirmidhi have devoted so much attention to this cardinal aspect of Sufism.[152] There is to be sure a difference between Shi'ism and Sufism on how and through whom this power and function operates as well as who is considered as its 'seal'.[153] But the similarity between the Shi'ah and the Sufis concerning this doctrine is most startling and results directly from the fact that both are connected in the manner mentioned above with Islamic esotericism as such, which is none other than *wilayah* or *walayat* as used in the technical sense in both Shi'ite and Sufi sources.

Among the practices of the Sufis there is one that is closely associated in its symbolic meaning with *wilayah* and in its origin with the Shi'ite *walayat*. It is the practice of wearing a cloak and handing it from the master to the disciple as a symbol of the transmission of a spiritual teaching and the particular grace associated with the act of initiation. Each state of being is like a cloak or veil that 'covers' the state above, for symbolically the 'above' is associated with the 'inward'. The Sufi cloak symbolizes the transmission of spiritual power which enables the disciple or *murid* to penetrate beyond his everyday state of consciousness. By virtue of being presented with this cloak or veil in its symbolic sense he is able to cast aside the inner veil that separates him from the Divine.

The practice of wearing and transmitting the cloak and the meaning of this act are closely associated with Shi'ism, as affirmed by Ibn Khaldun in the quotation cited above. According to the famous *Hadith-i kisa'* (the tradition of the garment) the Prophet called his daughter Fatimah along with 'Ali, Hasan and Husayn and placed a cloak upon them in such a manner that it covered them.[154] The cloak symbolizes the transmission of the universal *walayat* of the Prophet in the form of the partial *walayat* (*walayat-i fatimiyyah*) to Fatimah and through her to the Imams who were her descendents. There is a direct reference to the esoteric symbolism of

the cloak in a well-known Shi'ite hadith which because of its significance and beauty is quoted fully here:

'It has been accounted of the Prophet—upon him and his family be peace—that he said: "When I was taken on the nocturnal ascension to heaven and I entered paradise, I saw in the middle of it a palace made of red rubies. Gabriel opened the door for me and I entered it. I saw in it a house made of white pearls. I entered the house and saw in the middle of it a box made of light and locked with a lock made of light. I said, 'Oh, Gabriel, what is this box and what is in it?' Gabriel said, 'Oh Friend of God (*Habiballah*), in it is the secret of God (*sirrallah*) which God does not reveal to anyone except to him whom He loves.' I said, 'Open its door for me', He said, 'I am a slave who follows the divine command. Ask thy Lord until He grants permission to open it.' I therefore asked for permission of God. A voice came from the Divine Throne saying, 'Oh Gabriel open its door', and he opened it. In it I saw spiritual poverty (*faqr*) and a cloak (*muraqqa'*). I said, 'What is this *faqr and muraqqa'?'* The voice from heaven said, 'Oh Muhammad, there are two things which I have chosen for thee and the people (*ummah*) from the moment I created the two of you. These two thing I do not give to anyone save those whom I love, and I have created nothing dearer than these.'" Then the Holy Prophet said, "God—Exalted be His Name—selected *faqr* and the *muraqqa'* for me and these two are the dearest things to Him." The Prophet directed his attention toward God and when he returned from the nocturnal ascent (*mi'raj*) he made 'Ali wear the cloak with the permission of God and by His command. 'Ali wore it and sewed patches on it until he said, "I have sewn so many patches on this cloak that I am embarrassed before the sewer." 'Ali made his son Hasan to wear it after him and then Husayn and then the descendants of Husayn one after another until the Mahdi. The cloak rests with him now.'[155]

Ibn Abi Jumhur as well as the Shi'ite commentators upon this *hadith* add that the cloak worn and transmitted by the Sufis is not the same cloak cited in the *hadith*. Rather, what the Sufis seek to do is to emulate the conditions for wearing the cloak as the Prophet wore it and through this act to become aware to the extent of their capability of the divine mysteries (*asrar*) which the cloak symbolises.

The whole question of *walayat* and the cloak that symbolises it makes clear the most important common element between Sufism and Shi'ism, which is the presence of a hidden form of knowledge and instruction. The use of the method of *ta'wil* or spiritual hermeneutics in the understanding of the Holy Quran as well as of the 'cosmic text', and belief in grades of meaning within the revelation—both of which are common to Sufism and Shi'ism—result from the presence of this esoteric form of knowledge. The presence of *walayat* guarantees for Shi'ism and Sufism alike a gnostic and

esoteric character, of which the doctrine and the characteristic manner of instruction present in both are natural expressions.

Closely associated with *walayat* is the concept of the Imam in Shi'ism, for the Imam is he who possesses the power and function of walayat. The role of the Imam is central to Shi'ism, but we cannot deal here with all its ramifications.[156] But from the spiritual point of view it is important to point to his function as the spiritual guide, a function that closely resembles that of the Sufi master. The Shi'ite seeks to encounter his Imam, who is none other than the inner spiritual guide—so that some Shi'ite Sufis speak of the Imam of each person's being (*imam wujuduka*). If one leaves aside the Shari'ite and also cosmic functions of the Imam, his initiatory function and role as spiritual guide is similar to that of the Sufi master.

In fact just as in Sufism each master is in contact with the pole (*Qutb*) of his age, in Shi'ism all spiritual functions in every age are inwardly connected with the Imam. The idea of the Imam as the pole of the Universe and the concept of the *Qutb* in Sufism are nearly identical, as asserted so clearly by Sayyid Haydar Amuli when he says, 'The *Qutb* and the Imam are two expressions possessing the same meaning and referring to the same person.'[157] The doctrine of the universal or perfect man (*al-insan al-kamil*) [158] as expounded by Ibn 'Arabi is very similar to the Shi'ite doctrine of the *Qutb* and the Imam, as is the doctrine of the Mahdi developed by later Sufi masters. All these doctrines refer essentially and ultimately to the same esoteric reality, the *haqiqat al-muhammadiyyah*, as present in both Shi'ism and Sufism. And in this case as far as the formulation of this doctrine is concerned there may have been direct Shi'ite influences upon later Sufi formulations.[159]

Another doctrine that is shared in somewhat different forms by Shi'ites and Sufis is that of the 'Muhammadan light' (*al-nur al-muhammadi*) and the initiatic chain (*silsilah*). Shi'ism believes that there is a 'Primordial Light' passed from one prophet to another and after the Prophet of Islam to the Imams. This light protects the prophets and Imams from sin, making them inerrant (*ma'sum*), and bestows upon them the knowledge of divine mysteries. In order to gain this knowledge man must become attached to this light through the Imam who, following the Prophet, acts as man's intermediary with God in the quest for divine knowledge. In the same way, in Sufism, in order to gain access to the methods which alone make spiritual realisation possible, man must become attached to an initiatory chain or *silsilah* which goes back to the Prophet and through which a *barakah* flows from the source of revelation to the being of the initiate. The chain is thus based on a continuity of spiritual presence that much resembles the 'Muhammadan light' of Shi'ism. In fact later Sufis themselves also speak of the 'Muhammadan light'. In the early period, especially in teachings of

Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, the Shi'ite doctrine of the 'Muhammadan light' and the Sufi doctrine of the spiritual chain meet, and as in other cases have their source in the same esoteric teachings of Islam.[160]

Finally, in this comparison between Shi'ite and Sufi doctrines one should mention the spiritual and gnostic stations (*maqamat-i 'irfani*). If we turn to a study of the life of the Prophet and the Imams as, for example, found in the compilation of *Majlisi* in the *Bihar al-anwar*, we will discover that these accounts are based more than anything else upon the inner spiritual states of the personages concerned. The goal of the religious life in Shi'ism is, in fact, to emulate the life of the Prophet and the Imams and to reach their inward states. Although for the majority of Shi'ites this remains only a latent possibility, the elite (*khawass*) have always been fully aware of it. The spiritual stations of the Prophet and the Imams leading to union with God can be considered as the final goal toward which Shi'ite piety strives and upon which the whole spiritual structure of Shi'ism is based.

Now in Sufism also, the goal, which is to reach God, cannot be achieved except through the states and stations (*hal* and *maqam*) which occupy such a prominent position in the classical treatises of Sufism. The Sufi life is also one that is based on the achievement of these states, although the Sufi does not seek these states in themselves but seeks God in His Exalted Essence. Of course in Sufism nearly all the members of an order are conscious of the states and stations whereas in Shi'ism only the elite are aware of them, but this is quite natural inasmuch as Sufism as such is the path for the spiritual elite whereas Shi'ism concerns a whole community, possessing its own exoteric and esoteric division and having its own elite as well as its common believers (*'awamm*). But in these special significance given to the spiritual stations in the Shi'ite account of the lives of the Prophet and the Imams, there is a striking similarity with what one finds in Sufism. Here again both refer to the same reality, Islamic esotericism, with the practical and realised aspect of which the spiritual stations are concerned.

Having considered these few instances of the relationship between Shi'ism and Sufism in principle we must now discuss briefly how the relationship between the two has manifested itself in Islamic history.[161] During the lifetime of the Imams, from the first to the eighth, the contact between the two was most intimate. The writings of the Imams contain a treasury of Islamic gnosis. The *Nahj al-balaghah* of 'Ali,[162] one of the most neglected works of Islam in modern studies of the Western Islamicists, the *Sahifah sajjadiyyah* of the fourth Imam, Zayn al-'abidin, called the 'Psalms of the Family of the Prophet',[163] and the *Usul al-kafi* of Kulayni, containing the sayings of the Imams, outline a complete exposition of Islamic gnosis and have served in fact as a basis for many later gnostic and Sufi commentaries. Although their technical vocabulary is not in all respects

the same as the works of the early Sufis, as shown by Massignon,[164] the doctrines and spiritual expositions contained therein are essentially the same as one finds in the classical Sufi treatises.

During this period of the lifetime of the Imams there was intimate contact between the Imams and some of the greatest of the early Sufis. Hasan al-Basri and Uways al-Qarani were disciples of 'Ali; Ibrahim al-Adham, Bishr al-Hafi and Bayazid al-Bastami were associated with the circle of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq; and Ma'ruf al-Karkhi was a close companion of Imam Rida. Moreover, the earliest Sufis, before being called by this name, were known as ascetics (*zuhhad*) and many of them were associated with the Imams and followed their example in the ascetic life. In Kufa such men as Kumayl, Maytham al-Tammar, Rashid al-Hajari, all of whom were among the early Sufis and ascetics, belonged to the entourage of the Imams. The 'companions of the ledge' (*ashab al-suffah*) before them like Salman, Abu Dharr and 'Ammar al-Yasir, are also both poles of early Sufism and the early members of the Shi'ite community.[165]

It was only after the eighth Imam, Ali al-Rida, that the Shi'ite Imams no longer associated themselves openly with the Sufis. It is not that they spoke against Sufism as some exoteric Shi'ite critics of Sufism have claimed. Rather, because of special conditions prevailing at that time they remained silent in these matters. Imam Rida thus appears as the last explicit and open link between Sufism and the Shi'ite Imams. To this day he is in fact considered as the 'Imam of initiation' and many Persians who seek a spiritual master and initiation into Sufism go to his tomb in Mashhad to pray for his help in finding a master. For this reason also his role in the Shi'ite Sufi orders has been great to this day.

After the Imams, Shi'ism and Sufism became both distinct in themselves and to a certain extent separated from each other. During this period, in contrast to the lifetime of the Imams, Shi'ism began to have a more active political role while most of the Sufis, at least in the third / ninth and fourth / tenth centuries, shied away from participation in political life and all that possessed a worldly aspect. Yet some of the Sufis like al-Hallaj were definitely Shi'ite or of Shi'ite tendency and there are certain relations between Sufism and Shi'ism, particularly in its Isma'ili form, as we see in clear references to Sufism in the *Epistles* of the Brethren of Purity, which if not definitely Isma'ili in origin certainly come from a Shi'ite background and are later closely associated with Isma'ilis.[166] Twelve-Imam Shi'ism also showed some links with Sufism. Ibn Babuyah, the famous Shi'ite theologian, describers the Sufi circle (*halqah*) in which invocation (*dhikr*) is performed, and Sayyid Sharif Murtada calls the Sufis 'real Shi'ites'.[167] The guilds and different orders of chivalry (*futuwwat*) also reveal a link between Shi'ism and Sufism because on the one hand they grew in a Shi'ite climate with

particular devotion to 'Ali and on the other hand many of them became attached to Sufi orders and became extensions thereof in the form of 'craft initiations'.

After the Mongol invasion Shi'ism and Sufism once again formed a close association in many ways. Some of the Isma'ilis, whose power had been broken by the Mongols, went underground and appeared later within Sufi orders or as new branches of already existing orders. In Twelve-Imam Shi'ism also from the seventh / thirteenth to the tenth / sixteenth century Sufism began to grow within official Shi'ite circles. It was during this period that for the first time some of the Shi'ite *'ulama'* and jurisprudents were given such titles as *Sufi*, *'arif* or *muta'allih*, and some of them devoted many pages of their writings to Sufi doctrines. Kamal-al Din Maytham al-Bahrani in the seventh/ thirteenth century wrote a commentary upon the *Nahj al-balaghah* revealing its gnostic and mystical meaning. Radi al-Din "Ali ibn al-Tausi, a member of the well-known family of Shi'ite scholars and himself an outstanding Shi'ite *'alim*, wrote prayers with Sufi connotations. 'Allamah al-Hilli, the student of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and a person who played a great role in the spread of Shi'ism in Persia, has many works of gnostic character to his credit. Shortly after al-Hilli one of the most significant Shi'ite theologians of this period, Sayyid Haydar Amuli, was also a Sufi and follower of the school of Ibn 'Arabi. His *Jami' al-asrar* is a summit of gnostic Shi'ism, where perhaps in more than any other work the metaphysical relationship between Shi'ism and Sufism is treated.[168] It is Amuli who believed that every true Shi'ite is a Sufi and every true Sufi a Shi'ite.

The tendency toward the rapprochement between Sufism and official circles of Shi'ite learning and piety is to be seen in the ninth/fifteenth century in such figures as Hafiz Rajab al-Bursi, author of the gnostic treatise *Mashariq al-anwar*, Ibn Abi Jumhur, whose *Kitab al-mujli* is also a cornerstone of this new structure of Shi'ite gnostic literature and Kamal al-Din Husayn ibn 'Ali, entitled 'Wa'iz-i Kashifi'. The latter, although a Sunni, was a Naqshbandi Sufi and the author of Shi'ite devotional works which became extremely popular, especially the *Rawdat al-shuhada'*, which has given its name to the typically Shi'ite practice of *rawdah* in which the martyrdom of Husayn and other members of the housedhold of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) is celebrated. All these figures were instrumental in preparing the intellectual background for the Safavid renaissance which was based on both Shi'ism and Sufism.

Of special interest during this same period is the spread of the writings of Ibn 'Arabi in Persia and especially in Shi'ite circles.[169] It is well known that Ibn 'Arabi, from the point of view of his *madhhab*, was a Sunni of the Zahiri school. But it is also known that he wrote a treatise on the twelve

Shi'ite Imams which has always been popular among Shi'ites.[170] There existed an inward complementarism and attraction between the writings of Ibn "Arabi and Shi'ism which made the integration of his teachings into Shi'ite gnosis immediate and complete. Such Shi'ite Sufis as Sa'd al-Din Hamuhah, 'Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, Ibn Turkah, Sayyid Haydar Amuli and Ibn Abi Jumhur, as well as many other Shi'ite gnostics of this period, are thoroughly impregnated with the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi, not to speak of the Shi'ite philosophers and theosophers, the culmination of whose thought is found in Mulla Sadra and his school.

From the seventh / thirteenth to the tenth / sixteenth century there were also religious and Sufi movements which were linked with both Sufism and Shi'ism. The extremist sects of the *Hurufis* and the *Sha 'sha'ah* grew directly out of a background that is both Shi'ite and Sufi.[171] More important in the long run than these sects were the Sufi orders that spread in Persia at this time and aided in preparing the ground for the Shi'ite movement of the Safavids. Two of these orders are of particular significance in this question of the relation between Shi'ism and Sufism: The Ni'matullahi order and the Nurbakhshi order. Shah Ni'matullah came originally from Aleppo and although a descendant of the Prophet was probably a Sunni in his *madhhab*.[172] But the order, which is closely akin to the Shadhiliyyah order in its *silsilah* before Shah Ni'matullah, became a specifically Shi'ite Sufi order and remains to this day the most widespread Sufi order in the Shi'ite world. During the Safavid period it suffered an eclipse but underwent a major revival in the early Qajar era. The study of the Doctrines and methods of this order, which possesses a regularity of chain or *silsilah* and method very much similar to the Sufi orders in the Sunni world, is most revealing as an example of a still living order of Sufism that is thoroughly Shi'ite and functions in a Shi'ite climate.

The Nurbakhshi order, founded by Muhammad ibn 'Abdallah, entitled Nurbakhsh, a Persian from Quhistan, is particularly interesting in that the founder sought to create a kind of bridge between Sunnism and Shi'ism in his own person and gave a Mahdiist colour to his movement.[173]The spread of his order and the power of his personality were instrumental in drawing many people to hold particular reverence for 'Ali and the 'Allids. His own open declaration was that his movement combined Sufism and Shi'ism.[174] And the spread of his ideas was one of the factors that brought forth this combination of Shi'ism and Sufi movements which resulted in the Safavid domination of Iran.[175]

In the Ottoman Empire also one can observe the close association between Shi'ism and Sufism in the Baktashi order, founded by a Khurasani, Haji Baktash, who after fleeing from the Tartars found numerous disciples among the Persians and Anatolian Turks and established the order which exercised so much influence during the Ottoman period.[176] Although with

the establishment of a Shi'ite Persia by the Safavids the Shi'ites were severely persecuted in the Ottoman Empire, the Baktashi order continued to display strong Shi'ite tendencies and possessed, and in fact continues to possess, a spiritual atmosphere very similar to what one finds in certain Sufi orders in the Shi'ite world.

The rise of the Safavids from the nucleus of the Sufi order of Shaykh Safi al-Din Ardibili is too well known to need repetition here.[177] Suffice it to say that this political movement which founded the new Persian state was Sufi in origin and Shi'ite in belief. As a result it made Shi'ism the official religion of Persia while aiding the growth and propagation of Sufi ideas at least in the earlier period of its rule. It is not, therefore, surprising to see during this period a renaissance of Shi'ite gnosis plays such an important role. The names of Mir Findiriski, Sadr al-Din Shirazi Mull Muhsin Fayd, 'Add al-Razzaq Lahiji, Qadi Sa'id Qumi, Mulla Na'ima Taliqani and so many other gnostics of this period perhaps belong more to the chapter on Safavid theosophy and philosophy than to Sufism,[178] but since all these men were Shi'ite and at the same time completely impregnated with Sufi gnostic ideas, they represent yet another facet of the connection between Shi'ism and Sufism. There were also outstanding Shi'ite '*ulama*' of this period who were practising Sufis like Baha, al-Din 'Amili and Muhammad Taqi Majlisi as well as masters of regular Sufi orders like the Dhahabis, Ni'matullahis and Safavis.[179]

Strangely enough, however, during the reign of the same dynasty whose origin was Sufi a severe reaction set in against the Sufi orders partly because, due to royal patronage of Sufism, many extraneous elements had joined it for worldly ends and also because some of the orders became lax in their practice of the *Shari'ah*. Some of the religious scholars wrote treatises against the Sufis such as *al-fawaid al-diniyyah fi'l-radd 'ala'l-hukama' wa'l-sufiyyah* by Mulla Muhammad Tahir Qumi. Even the outstanding theologian and scholar, Mulla Muhammad Baqir Majlisi, who was not completely against Sufism as attested by his *Zad al-maad*, was forced in these circumstances to deny his own father's Sufism and openly oppose the Sufis. In such a climate Sufism encountered a great deal of difficulty during the latter part of the Safavid era and in this period even the theosophers (*hukama*) of the school of Mulla Sadra faced severe opposition from some of the '*ulama*'. It was as a result of this situation that in religious circles Sufism henceforth changed its name to '*irfan* and to this day in the official Shi'ite religious circles and *madrasahs*, one can openly study, teach and discuss '*irfan* but never tasawwuf, which is too often associated with the indisciplined and lax dervishes oblivious to the injunctions of the *Shari'ah* who are usually called *qalandar ma'ab* in Persian.

During the ensuing Afghan invasion and the re-establishment of a strong government by Nadir Shah there was not much talk of Sufism in Shi'ite circles

in Persia while Sufism prospered in Shi'ite milieus in India. And it is from the Deccan that in the twelfth / eighteenth century Ma'sum 'Ali Shah and Shah Tahir of the Ni'matullahi order were sent to Persia to revive Sufism. Although some of their disciples like Nur 'Ali Shah and Muzaffar Ali Shah were martyred,[180] Sufism began to flourish once again, especially during the rule of the Qajar king Fath 'Ali Shah, while Muhammad Shah and his prime minister, hajj Mirza Agasi, were themselves attracted to Sufism. Henceforth the different Sufi orders, especially the various branches of the Ni'matullahi, as well as the Dhahabi and Khaksar, flourished in Shi'ite Persia and continue to do so now. Also during the Qajar period, the gnostic doctrines of Ibn 'Arabi and Sadr al-Din Shirazi were revived by such men as Hajji Mulla Hadi Sabziwari and Aqa Muhammad Rida Qumsha'i;[181] their school still continues to thrive at the present time.

Today in the Shi'ite world and particularly Shi'ite Persia one can distinguish between three groups of gnostics and mystics: those who belong to regular Sufi orders such as the Ni'matullahi or the *Dhahabi* and who follow a way very similar to those of Sufis in the Sunni world; those who also have had a definite spiritual master and have received regular initiation but whose master and those before his do not constitute an organized and 'institutionalized' Sufi order with an openly declared *silsilah* and established centre or *khaniqah*; and finally those who have definitely received a gnostic and mystical inspiration and have authentic visions (*mushahadah*) and experience spiritual states (*ahwal*), but who do not possess a human master. Of this latter group some are Uwaysis, others belong to the line of *Khadir* or *Khidr* in Persian,[182] and most reach spiritual contact with the Imam who is also the inner spiritual guide. The overflow of esotericism in Shi'ism into even the more outward aspects of the religion has made this third type of possibility more common here than one would find in Sunni Islam. Some of the great theopsophers and gnostics in fact, who have definitely reached the state of spiritual vision as attested by their works, belong to this latter category and also perhaps to the second category because in that case likewise it is difficult to discern the spiritual lineage outwardly.

Shi'ism and Sufism, then, possess a common parentage in that they are both linked with the esoteric dimension of the Islamic revelation and in their earliest history drew inspiration from the same sources. In later periods they have had many mutual interactions and influenced each other in innumerable ways. But these historical manifestations have been no more than applications to different moments of time of an essential and principal relationship which belongs to the eternal and integral reality of Islam itself and which in the form of the gnosis that characterizes Islamic esotericism has manifested itself in both segments of the Islamic community, the Sunni and Shi'ite alike.

Shi'ism, Sufism and Gnosticism ('Irfan)[183]

Hajj Nor `Ali Tabandeh, Majdhub `Alishah

Abstract

"My Lord! Expand my breast for me, and make easy for me my work, and loosen the knot of my tongue that they may understand my speech. "[184]

Concerning Shi'ism and Sufism, two words denoting the same reality, many mistakes have been made by contemporary scholars, especially Westerners. These mistakes have either been made out of ignorance or were intentional. From the start, the mission of some of them was to create corruption within Shi'ism and to instigate sectarianism within Islam, as well as to provide information for their own colonialist apparatus. Many of them came to the same conclusion sincerely, although they were exploited by others.

The first mistake that they made about this problem was with regard to what they called the date of the historical appearance of Shi'ism. Some say that it began after the passing away of Imam `Ali, peace be with him. Others say that it appeared after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, peace be with him. There are other opinions of this sort, as well. Their mistake is a confusion between the appearance of a name with the appearance of its denotation. While a name can appear or gain currency at any time, this plays no role in the main issue. When a school of thought is at issue, one should not pay attention to mere labels. Just as the Shi'ites were sometimes called the Sh`ites of `Ali and sometimes the *Shu`bites,*[185] for the Shi`ites clung to this verse of the Qur'an in which God says, *"O people! Verily We have created you of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes (shu`ub) that you may recognize each other. Verily, the most honoured of you with God is the most God-wary."*[186] This was because there were non-Arabs who converted to Islam and who expected no difference to be made between them and the Arabs. Unfortunately

however, among the caliphs, except for Imam `Ali and Imam Hasan, such differences were more or less made. In reaction to this, The Shi`ites referred to this verse. There was also a period during which they were called *Rafidi,* meaning "those who abandoned their religion". In this way, the Shi`ites were called by a variety of names, but, as was mentioned, the appearance of a name is no reason for the previous absence of its denotation.

We have to see the difference between the Shi`ite and Sunni views within Islam, and what are their principles so that we can discern when Shi'ism originated on the basis of the appearance of its principles.

After the passing away of the Prophet, 'Ali, 'Abbas the uncle of the Prophet, and perhaps some of the other Hashimites busied themselves with his burial. While they were busy with this, a group gathered in a place known as Saqifah Bani Sa'idah, and appointed Abu Bakr as caliph in a process narrated in history. Abu Bakr thus became the first caliph. After Abu Bakr, 'Umar became caliph, and after him 'Uthman. The fourth was 'Ali, peace be with him.

From the very beginning, after the passing away of' the Prophet, those who disapproved of' the event of Saqifah Bani Sa`idah said that just as the Prophet was not selected by us, but was chosen by God, likewise, his successor should not be selected by the people, and the people have no right to do that, but it should be according to God's will. They continued that since our Prophet is the last of the prophets, there is no further revelation, but because whatever the Prophet said amounts to revelation, as is explicitly affirmed by the verse, "*Nor does he speak of his own inclination. It is naught but a revelation revealed unto him.*"[187] Whoever the Prophet appoints is appointed by God Himself. The Prophet appointed `Ali to be his successor at various times during his mission. Therefore, the successor of The Prophet is `Ali, not anyone appointed by the people.

Those Sunnites who accept the event of' Saqifah say that since the people were gathered there and chose the caliph, their choice is valid, and he is the caliph (although, this position has also been subject to criticism, since all the people or the chiefs and decision makers were not present).

Historically speaking, there is no doubt but that after the Prophet, Abu Bakr, then 'Umar, then `Uthman, then `Ali, and then Imam Hasan became caliph. But the Shi'ites say that the real succession to the Prophet, that is, his spiritual caliphate, is the right, or rather, the duty of `Ali. The major difference and disagreement arises from this point. The followers of Abu Bakr, 'Umar and `Uthman were named Sunnites, while the followers of`Ali and Imam Hasan were called Shi`ites. So, the main difference between The Shi'tes and the Sunnites is that latter allow the people to select the caliph while the former believe that the caliphate should be determined according to the order and decree of the Prophet.

It is obvious that `Ali was appointed after the Prophet, and since there must always be a divine representative on the face of the earth, after `Ali, whoever he appoints is the caliph, and so on and so forth. If we take this difference into consideration, we will see that the basis of Shi'ism came into sight immediately after the passing away of the Prophet, but one cannot say that it came into existence then. The difference was already present, but during the lifetime of the Prophet, it did not emerge because there was no case for it. After the passing away of the Prophet, the different inferences became apparent.

Thus, Shi`ism appeared right from the time of the passing away of the Prophet. But later, Shi`ite and Sunnite Islam absorbed other materials and ideas as they moved forward through the course of history so that each of them was transformed into a system of rules and ideas. The basic principles of Shi`ism are those mentioned above. We could say that every poet, writer and Sufi is a Shi`ite who believes in the *walayah*[188] *of* `Ali, that is that `Ali is the immediate and true successor of the Prophet, and that this is his exclusive right. Taking this point into consideration, people like Sa'di, Hafiz and Rumi, and in general, all the great Sufis were Shi`ites.

If they differed according to their jurisprudential precepts, this difference is irrelevant to the basic issue. just as there are numerous issues of Islamic law about which Shi'ite and Sunni jurists disagree that are also among the Shi`ite jurists themselves. However, the basic point is that anyone who believes in the *walayah* of `Ali may be considered Shi`ite. Therefore, as we have mentioned, Shi'ism appeared right after the passing away of the Prophet, although its teachings were already present. This was not apparent because there was no opponent to deny them.

When foreign non-Muslim scholars investigate an idea, they do not engage the school of thought itself and its principles; rather, they focus on its outward phenomena. Therefore, since `Ali sometimes helped the caliphs to carry out the rules of Islamic law, such scholars do not consider this period to be that of the existence or emergence of Shi`ism. They take as their criterion for the emergence of Shi'ism the time when differences arose between `Ali and the caliphs. Of course, this mistake has also insinuated itself among Muslim researchers, especially those who are ignorant of the basic spirituality of the first Muslims. Throughout history there have always been numerous disagreements between these two ideas, the Shi`ite idea of appointment of the leader, and the Sunnite idea of election. The caliphs were constantly busy with destroying the Shi`ite idea through various means, and they even persecuted the proponents of this idea, the Shi`ites, so that they practiced dissimulation *(taqiyyah)* during the entire period of the Imams, and even later. This is the cause of the encouragement of dissimulation among the Shi'ites. In this regard there are famous stories,

such as that about `Ali ibn Yaqtin who was a minister of' Harun al-Rashid and practiced dissimulation.

In this way, a number of' the Shi`ites were forced to retirement in order not to be found out and so that they could organize their ideas and beliefs and guide others. They found another name in the history of Islam, that name was Sufi, and little by little the term *tasawwuf* (Sufism) became current. It makes no difference what the etymology of the word Sufism is. What is usually said and referred to, is that *tasawwuf* stems from the root *suf*, meaning wool, and that the meaning of *tasawwuf* is wearing woolen garments. Sufis usually wore wool and it is reported that the prophets also dressed in wool. Since wool is especially coarse, and it is uncomfortable to the body, one cannot sleep much with it, and is kept awake to pray. It is from this that a story in the book *Tadhkirah al-Awliyya*[189] was written according to which someone (Sufiyan Thuri) came across Imam Ja`afar Sadiq, peace be with him, on the road. He saw that the Imam was wearing expensive cloth woven of silk and wool *(khazz)*[190], so, he came to him and after greeting him said, "O son of the Apostle of Allah! It is not appropriate for you, as the son of the Apostle of Allah, to wear such luxurious soft clothing." The Imam took his hand and placed it under his sleeve. He saw that the Imam was wearing a coarse woolen undergarment that irritated his arms. The Imam said, "This one is for God," as he indicated the woolen garment; "and that one is for the people," he said, pointing to the soft garment *(khazz)*. The very occurrence of such a story and such an encounter, even if we do not believe it really happened, in the writing of Shaykh `Attar, which says that the woolen garment is for God, indicates that the great Sufis, the head of whom at that time was Hadrat Ja'far Sadiq, considered the rough woolen garment to be a sign of worship and preparation for worship.

In any case, it is apparently more suitable to take the word Sufism *(tasawwuf)* as being from the root *suf* (wool). In fact, it is another name that has been applied to this group, [that is, the Shi`ites] which has gained currency. In the same way, we see that today, for example, in a country whose government is against Islam and that proclaims itself to be secular, they disband an Islamic party and destroy its name,; but the same group under a different name forms another party, and for a while continues its activities. Shi'ism has proceeded in the same manner, that is, in the history of Islam, Shi`ism has shown itself under another name, the name of Sufism.

The basis of Sufism from the beginning, as it regards doctrines, was that the successor of the Prophet is `Ali, and that among the companions of the Prophet, `Ali was the most excellent. However, in practice they had various styles of life, in the same way as the Shi`ites believe that every age has its own requirements. 'Ali, for example, had an outwardly humble life of poverty. In spite of' the fact that he founded many palm groves through his

own labor, he endowed all of' them and did not make use of them himself. In contrast, Imam Ja`far Sadiq had an outward life of luxury and wealth. It is up to the Imam, the great person of his time, to decide according to the demands of the times how to live.

Thus, in the course of history we find that sometimes Sufism takes the form of asceticism and seclusion, and at other times, or in the case of certain persons, it appears as social activity and struggle. In the same way, we have observed different styles of life through the course of history, but none of these is the basis of Sufism. The Foundation of Sufism is nothing but executorship *(wasayah)*[191] and *walayah,* not other extraneous matters. The other matters came about through the course of history because of the demands of the times. The same error that has arisen regarding Shi'ism and the word *tashayyu'* has also appeared regarding Sufism. Some say that for the first time it appeared in the second/eighth century. Accordingly, every writer seems to have his own theory, however, Sufism is the very essence and meaning of Shi`ism.

In the history of Shi`ism, some people paid more attention to the rules of Islamic law, and presented their theories in this regard. They are the *fuqaha* (jurists of Islamic law). Another group of Shi`ites gave priority to doctrinal issues and to the way of perfection toward God. They are the Sufis. In fact, they are, as the expression goes, like the two arms of one body. However, many times, without noticing this, some hold that there is opposition between these two groups. Many orientalists do the same, because the more opposition there is among them, the more the orientalists benefit. The basis and spirit of Islam is in Shi`ism and the spirit of Shi`ism is in Sufism. Sufism is nothing other than Shi'ism, and real Shi`ism is nothing other than Sufism.

It is here that researchers have found another ground, but a ground that also creates schisms. Only God knows whether this was deliberate or unintentional. In any case, some have said that Sufism was created in order to destroy Shi`ism and to spoil Islam. They made some pseudo-Sufis their criterion, and they referred to some pretenders to Sufism who either paid no attention, to spiritual matters, or whose links to their source was broken. Since in Sufism, according to the principles of Shi`ism, only those who have been explicitly appointed by the previous guide and *pir,*[192] deserve leadership and guidance of the people, and all are agreed that this permission for guidance will continue until the day of the resurrection. However, the twelver Shi`ites believe that during the occultation of the Imam, one who is appointed by the Imam only has the right to make *bay`at* with the believers. He also has the right to appoint his successor, so that this chain continued. Therefore, one whose permission reaches from hand to hand to the Imam has legal and legitimate leadership and guidance, and otherwise this chain is broken. How many there have been whose chain was

broken but based on their own personal opinions they propounded matters as Sufism that are no part of Sufism. There are a small number of researchers who have noticed this. For example, in a book that has been translated into Farsi, *Mystics and Commisars,*[193] the authors, Alexandre Bennigsen and S. Enders Wimbush, review Sufism in the former Soviet Union and say that Sufism is neither a sect nor a movement of renegades, but is an inseparable part of true Islam. Western analysts, in particular, are apt to close their eyes to this reality, and they repeatedly refer to Sufism as a phenomenon foreign to Islam, and even as a deviation from it. Since in the former Soviet Union forces opposing religion were in power in the government, the researcher who investigates the conditions in the Soviet Union will come to this conclusion [that Sufism is not separate from Islam].

Another argument often mentioned by some orientalists is that Shi`ism, and according to others, Sufism, was a way in which Iranians combated the governance of the Arabs after the Arabs conquered their country and defeated their royal dynasty and government. They argue that it was in this way that the Iranians showed their reaction, and that the history of much of the Sufi resistance makes it clear that it was this that led to the liberation of Iran from the chains of the foreigners. However, it should be noticed that it was not the Arabs but Islam that conquered Iran. For example, when the armies of Islam came to Iran, they succeeded in their conquest until the city of Rayy, and the people became Muslims. Afterward, everyone accepted Islam willingly.

A comparison of two matters paves the way to an understanding of the cause of this. On the one hand, it is narrated that Anushiravan[194] invited the rich merchants of the bazaar and asked them to lend him money to carry out the war. After he finished his speech, a shoemaker said, "I am ready to give you the entire amount you need, not as a loan, but as a gift. There is only one condition, that you allow my son to become literate and to study." Anushiravan became angry: "I should allow the son of a shoemaker to study!?" He did not accept. On the other hand, Islam commands "Searching for knowledge is obligatory for all Muslims." Likewise, after the Battle of Badr, when the captives were brought and their families came to pay ransom for them, the Prophet said, "Any of these captives who teach reading and writing to seven Muslims will be freed."

Compare these two matters, aside from the spiritual aspect, if you just look at the outward aspect, when two armies, one with the former sort of thinking and one with the latter, confront one another, which will be victorious?

In any case, it is Islam that conquered Iran. Iranians were always fond of Islam and the Muslims. All their revolutions made against the governments of the foreigners, if they were carried out while preserving Islam, they reached their aims, like the rising of Abu Muslim Khorasani,

or the rising of the Sarbedaran [against the Mongols], or the Safavids, the latter two of which were Sufis, and others. Those who made a revolution only for the independence of Iran but who were really against Islam were not victorious. People like Hashim ibn Hikam (known as al-Muqanna`), Maziyar, Babak and Afshin are of this kind. For this reason, their dynasties did not last and many of them disappeared after a short time. There is not even a trace of their thinking left. However, the orientalists ignore all these facts, and consider Sufism and Shi`ism as Iranian uprisings against Arabs and they interpret them as weapons of this struggle, although Sufism is the same as Shi`ism and Shi'ism is the same as Islam. Historical evidence for this is found in the fact that the uprising of the Safavids caused Shi`ism to dominate Iran.

Another matter that causes confusion and mistakes about the issue is that it is said that Sufism is something other than `irfan. True with regard to the words, they are two things: *Our expressions differ, but Your beauty is one.*[195] This doubt was created long ago; even many of the opponents of Sufism who wrote refutations of it have expressed their approval of *`irfan*. They admit that some scholars consider *`irfan* and Sufism to be the same, but they deny it.

Now, let's briefly see what *'irfan* is. Literally, *`irfan* is knowing. Knowing has different stages. For example, Abraham, peace be with him, who *knew,* that is, by his own innate nature *(fitrat)* he understood that this world has a God, and that God governs all things, had some knowledge. When he saw a star, he said, "*This is my god.*" It was the bright star said to have been Sirius. But when the star set, he said, "*I do not like the setting ones.*"[196] When the moon appeared, which, as a rule was a full moon, he said, "*This is my god.*" But after it set, he again thought and said, "*This also set. So, it, too, is not the God of the world.*" This means that he had reached a stage in which he knew that there is a God, and that this God has power and greatness, but that in his primitive imagination he held that this God was corporeal. Then the sun rose. He said, "*Certainly this is God.*" It also set, and he then said, "*I do turn my face toward the One Who has created the heavens and the earth.*"[197] At that time he recognized and understood that the God for Whom he was searching is not a body and is not corporeal, and that it is He Who created the heavens, the star, the moon and the sun.

These are gnostic *(`irfani)* stages. The most primitive stage of gnosis *(`irfan)* was that first one, in which Abraham did not know whether the God Who created him was corporeal or not; what sort of God is He? Gradually, he came to the point where God in the Qur'an says: "*In this way We showed Abraham the kingdom (malakut) of the heavens and the earth.*"[198] Thus, everyone who knows God and realizes that there is a God has a degree of gnosis, because gnosis is not an absolute matter. It is something that, as the

philosophers say, is graduated *(tashkiki),* such as light and faith, which have degrees. It starts from the least degree, and if God grants success, it reaches higher degrees. For example, imagine someone in a desert in which there is no habitation. From a distance he sees a black spot in the clear air (this clear air should be understood as his pure intention). He only knows that it is a black spot, and to that extent he knows only that there is something there. When he goes towards it a bit, he sees that this black spot becomes a straight line. Then he recognizes, that is, he acquires gnosis, that the thing over there is a long body. If he continues further and goes forward a bit more, he sees that the body has different branches. He finds out that it is a tree with branches. As he advances further, he sees that on the branches there are spots like leaves. He notices that the tree has leaves, that is, it is alive. He sees that it shakes and rustles. He understands that it is affected by wind. By going further he realizes that there are things hanging from the tree. He realizes that the tree bears fruit. When he advances further, he sees that the fruit is apple, or such and such a fruit. Thus, he finds gnosis *('irfan).* When he gets near to it and tastes the apple or whatever fruit there is, he finds out that it is sweet.

The same degrees of gnosis will appear for one who takes the course of knowing God. Gnosis and knowing God occurs in the same way. Therefore, when someone is called a gnostic *('arif)* it does not mean that he has something of which others are absolutely deprived, that he has it all. Being a gnostic also has degrees. There is the gnostic and the one who is more of a gnostic. The way to reach perfect gnosis, that is, the perfection of gnosis, is called Sufism. This means that Sufism is the practical way of reaching gnosis (*'irfan*).

Thus, Sufism and gnosis (*'irfan)* are two words signifying the same thing, or they may be thought of as two sides of the same coin, or it may be said that the former shows the way and the latter the result wayfaring. In any case, they are both one and two.

The opposition that sometimes now is claimed in Iran to exist between gnosis and Sufism might he due to the bad political situation. They cannot say bad things about gnosis (*'irfan*) because so many of the great figures have appreciated it, and it is generally beloved. On the other hand, they cannot accept Sufism because it might damage their worldly life. Hence, they say that gnosis (*'irfan*) is something other than Sufism. There are even people who previously were following the way of Sufism and later became opposed to it and have written rejections of it. In order to fortify their rejections and to disassociate themselves from their pasts, they say that gnosis (*'irfan*) is good, but that it is other than Sufism. They continue to the extent that many of the older generation were mistaken and thought that these two were one. From this it is apparent that many of the great figures of the past have attested to this truth.

Chapter Three

The Reality of Gnosis (*'Irfan*)

Muhsin Araki,
Islamic Centre of England, UK

Abstract

This paper presents an experiential introduction to the reality of mysticism illustrated extensively with quotations from the great Persian Sufi poets. It addresses the nature of mysticism, its subject of study that is the divine essence, its faculty of perception that is the heart and its results in godly action. Ultimately it demonstrates how mystical discourse and knowledge is rooted in the Islamic revelation and the sayings and teachings of the Prophet and his progeny.

Gnosis or mystical knowledge possesses many traits and characteristics that serve to distinguish it from other forms of knowledge. In this paper, we shall attempt to point out some of the most significant of these characteristics, thus distinguishing this particular form of knowledge from others, to the degree possible in such a short work.

I: Direct knowledge

> Knowledge that is not directly of God,
> Is no more permanent than make-up
> But if you carry this weight well,
> The burden shall be taken off your shoulders
> And joy shall be granted you. [199]

As defined by logicians, knowledge consists of the presence of the 'form' of the known before the knower. This definition applies to all conventional

branches of science and scholarship. Normal knowledge never constitutes the immediate presence of the essence of the known before the knower. Thus, no scholar or scientist may perceive the object of his study directly, without the mediation of forms. In general, all scientific knowledge is indirect knowledge, in that the scientist always perceives the form of what he is studying, and then, through knowledge of this form, perceives the essence of the object of his investigation. Moreover, this rule applies to Islamic studies as well. Even those fields of learning that are very close to mystical knowledge in their aim and subject matter, such as Islamic jurisprudence or philosophy, are not exempt from this general principle.

Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy are both indirect cognitions of the manifestations of the divine, the difference being that jurisprudence has as its subject ethical and normative signs and manifestations, while philosophy is concerned with natural ones. Knowledge attained in both of these fields is, like all other fields of scholarship, of the mediated type, where the known is perceived by the knower through its form. In this form of knowledge, *al-ma'lūm bi l-dhāt* (the known-in-itself, that is, the idea or form of the object known), is not the same as *al-ma'lūm bi l-'araḍ* (the object itself), and what is united with the essence of the knower and is added to it is not the objective essence of the known but only an ideal form of it, which, naturally, is something different from it, though, because of the fact that it is a revelation of the object itself, enjoys essential unity with it. In other words, this unity is a unity in the sense of 'primary predication' (*al-ḥaml al-awwalī*), the basis of which is essence (*māhiyya*) and the concept (*mafhūm*), and not a unity in the sense of 'common predication' (*al-ḥaml al-shā'i'*), the basis of which is unity in being.

The significant characteristic of mystical knowledge is that it does not fall within the category of acquired knowledge (*ma'ārif-i ḥuṣūlī*). It is, on the contrary, a form of knowledge by presence (*ma'rifat-i ḥuḍūrī*), in which it is the essence of the object itself that is perceived and not an idea of it. In other words, in this form of perception, the essence, meaning the objective reality of the known, is identical with the knowledge attained by the knower. It follows, then, that mystical knowledge is immediate and direct perception, without any reliance on intermediation of idea or image. In this aspect, then, it is different from all other forms of knowledge.

> Whoever has a mind at rest and a fine lover at his side
> Fortune and felicity, joy and happiness are also his.
> The gate opening into the shrine of love
> Lies far beyond the reach of reason,
> Only he who is willing to sacrifice his life may reach it. [200]

In the mystical quest for the truth, the aim of the seeker is, first and foremost, to reach a particular destination. Knowledge, then, follows in the wake of this attainment. In the case of ordinary forms of knowledge it is precisely the opposite, in that the aim is to know. Such knowledge may then lead to the attainment of the thing itself, although it is by no means certain that it will do so. To sum up then, knowledge does not necessitate arrival, while knowledge constitutes an inseparable aspect of attainment. In the Qur'an, the word *'ilm* (knowledge) generally refers to mystical knowledge, which signifies arrival at, and the attainment of, the object of knowledge. Thus, from the Qur'anic viewpoint, perfect and fruitful knowledge is that which leads to man's spiritual development and enables him to reach his destination.

It is for the reasons set forth above that mystical insight gives birth to wisdom, which is profound and comprehensive understanding of the truth. An understanding able to reveal all aspects of the truth, its roots, results and manifold relations with other realities can only be gained by attaining the truth itself. In abstract knowledge, which is perception of the form of an object, also known as acquired or formal knowledge (since it relies on form and idea), the final result is a picture of reality that is, in some cases, partial and incomplete. In many instances, then, this image-making process produces a picture of reality with colour and properties very different from those of the original object. As a result, it not only does not reveal reality, but also becomes a veil that hides the truth from the perceiver.

> What do you seek in formal studies?
> How long will you pursue it?
> Seek such knowledge that will free you
> From all material attachments.
> Seek that knowledge which illuminates the heart,
> Turning the breast into Mount Sinai.
> A knowledge that mastered,
> Turns your heart into the Protected Tablet.
> Seek that knowledge that cannot be found in books,
> Is intuitive, not conveyed by words;
> A knowledge that does not bring you low, making you a slave
> of natural laws.
> A knowledge that shall show you the way,
> Reveal to you the eternal secret,
> A knowledge which is not argumentative,
> Entirely excellent, not discursive.
> The knowledge that shall give you new life,
> Believe me, is the science of love. [201]

Thus, the truth and spirit of wisdom is mysticism, and the fruit of real mysticism is perfect wisdom:

> Who can tell what goes on in
> The hearts of those tormented by spiritual desire?
> Who can take revenge from heaven
> For the spilt blood of the wine-jar?
> Except for the wise wine living in the vat,
> Who can reveal to us the secret of wisdom.
> Let the drunken Narcissus be put to shame
> By the languishing gaze of wine-lovers,
> If it dares to bud again.

This is the same wisdom that has been referred to by the Qur'an as 'the great benefit' (*khayr-i kathīr*)[202] and is the best present that the prophets have made to mankind, and the best teachers of which have been the same divinely inspired prophets, the best of whom is Muhammad, may God bless him and his progeny.

> He it is Who raised among the illiterates an Apostle from among themselves, who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom (al-hikma). [203]

II: The subject of mysticism is the essence of God

The subject of mystical knowledge is the holy essence of the supreme Truth (*dhāt-i aqdas-i Ḥaqq muta'āl*), while in all other forms of learning, even in jurisprudence and philosophy, it is God's signs and manifestations that are being investigated. For in all such sciences and disciplines, one or another of God's effects or manifestations is subjected to scientific or scholarly investigation and analysis, while the object of mystical knowledge is the holy essence of God Himself. Here, all His effects and manifestations are seen to be dissolved therein and serve merely to reflect His holy essence.

> When the mystic saw Your face
> Reflected in the cup,
> The laughter of the wine
> Inspired in him
> A false expectation.
> One brief reflection of your beauty

In the mirror
Gave birth to so many patterns
In that mirror of illusions.

The 'false expectation' mentioned above is that of attaining the 'true knowledge' referred to by the Prophet when he said, "We cannot truly know You (*mā 'arafnāka ḥaqqa ma'rifatika*)". It is also the subject of the request Moses makes of God: "O Lord, may I see you?" to which God answers, "I cannot be seen (*lan tarānī*)". [204] It is also the phoenix that, according to *Ḥāfeẓ*, cannot be trapped.

The phoenix is not to be caught,
Dismantle your trap!
In his abode, traps yield nothing.
When at the feast,
Drink a few cups and leave.
Do not set your heart
On everlasting union.

If, however, the attainment of perfect knowledge of God, which entails removal of all veils and boundaries that separate the seeker from the Beloved, is not possible, the removal of the 'self', which is the greatest of veils, is possible. It is this station of knowledge, consisting of the annihilation and dissolution of the individual self in God and its rebirth in the Divine, that is the goal of the mystic.

If we can kiss the threshold of the Beloved,
We can raise our head to the sky.
My bowed frame may seem worthless to you,
But it is from the bow that the arrow
May be shot, piercing the eye of the enemy.
The clothes worn by the dervish are not
The finery found at the royal court,
All I have is a patched and ragged robe
Which one can set on fire without remorse.
If the door leading to the great joy
Of union with You is opened,
Seekers shall prostrate themselves before that threshold,
Dazzled by that vision.

That 'bowed frame' from which one can aim an arrow at the eye of the enemy is no other than the soul that has undergone mortification and has

submitted to God's will. As the result of this submission and mortification, it has gained the power to turn its back on everything except God, and this is identical with the aforementioned station of annihilation (*fanā'*).

> The beauty of the Beloved is not hidden behind veils,
> But you must settle the dust of the road, if you wish to see it.
> If you desire the joy of being in His presence
> And to have a soul which is in harmony,
> This may be granted to you as a blessing by the enlightened ones.
> But as long as you desire the lips of the beloved and the cup of wine,
> Do not imagine that you can reach higher.
> O heart, if you only become aware of the light of guidance,
> Like a candle, laughing, you can lose your head.
> If you heed this royal advice, O *Hāfez*,
> You may tread upon the royal highway of Truth.

III: The faculty of mystical knowledge is the heart

In mystical knowledge the faculty of cognition is the very centre of human awareness (the 'I'), also referred to as the 'heart,' while in other forms of knowledge, the faculty of perception is one of man's external faculties. All ordinary knowledge, whether sensual or rational, is gained through the faculties of the mind, reason or the senses, all of which constitute the lower reaches of the self, or, to put it another way, are faculties created and developed by the self. On the other hand, man's self possesses a core, referred to as the heart, which constitutes the basis of his true life, and the death of which signals the termination of his real life and his fall into the jaws of death. For example, God addresses His Prophet in the following manner:

> You can never make the dead listen to you. When the deaf run away from you, you cannot get them to listen to you. [205]

The 'dead' referred to in the above verse are those who, in the words of the Qur'an, are 'dead at heart'. In other words, they are human beings whose hearts have stopped functioning and have been sealed:

> Those infidels are the ones whose hearts, ears and eyes have been sealed by God. They are the ignorant, and inevitably, they shall be the losers in the hereafter. [206]

When this 'heart', which is the centre of man's true life, stops functioning, his powers of sight and hearing and the other powers and faculties of his real life also cease working, just as it has been pointed out in the above verse and in other Qur'ānic verses. On the other hand, when the 'heart' is alive and vibrant, man's real life flourishes and his other faculties become lively, sharp and vibrant. It is in this condition that man becomes ready to accept the Truth that his inner being is illuminated by remembrance of God, and the way leading to union with the holy essence of the Almighty God is opened to him:

> Verily in this Book there is a reminder for the one who has a heart, who has hearkened, and is a witness to the truth. [207]

In the holy Qur'ān, the loss of the 'heart' is equated with final and ultimate loss and is regarded as the greatest of all defeats and deprivations:

> Those infidels are the ones whose hearts, ears and eyes have been sealed by God. They are the ignorant, and inevitably, they shall be the losers in the hereafter. [208]

In the following verse the loss of the vital power of the 'heart', which is its ability to hear and see, is considered to be the ultimate loss of the self:

> They could not hear or see. They are those who have lost themselves. And what they had falsely imagined, they could not get or benefit from. [209]

Thus, it is in the heart that God is remembered and contacted and it is also the centre of man's spiritual life and of his power of intuition and spiritual insight. This Qur'ānic concept is one of the central themes of Islamic mystical literature, expressed in various forms. For example, in the following verses, Rumi states it in this manner:

> If the mirror of the heart is cleansed
> You shall behold otherworldly images in it;
> You shall see the painting and the Painter;
> You shall see the rug of creation and the Weaver [210]

Hāfez says:

For years the heart asked me for the magic cup;
What it already possessed, it begged from a stranger.
The gem that is free from the veil of time and space,
Pleaded with lost souls, wandering by the seashore.

The physical senses have no role whatsoever in this mode of perception:

There are five senses other than the material ones.
They are like gold, while the ordinary senses are like copper.
In the market of the experts,
How will they buy the copper senses at the same price
As the golden ones? [211]

And:

Your imagination, thought, sense and understanding
Are like that wooden stick that the child fancies as his horse. [212]

Nor can ordinary reason be of any assistance on this path:

Your amorous look proved such heady wine to lovers
That knowledge became foolish and reason lost its senses.
I wandered far and wide to ask the wise
The cause of the pain of separation.
But faced with this question, the judge of reason
Was turned into a mindless fool. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

IV: Mystical knowledge leads to action

One of the characteristics of mystical knowledge is that it leads to action (*'amal*). Whenever it penetrates a heart, it transforms it. The transformation of the heart signifies change in the very essence of a human being. This transformation is accompanied by the purification of the heart and the sharpening and purifying of one's inner, spiritual and intuitive perceptions. These would be impossible unless the individual humbles himself before the Beloved, the Supreme Reality.

What an amazing science is the astronomy of love,
Whose highest heavenly sphere is the lowest earthly plain!

In other words, in the science of love, in order to ascend to the highest point, one must descend to the lowest; that is, it is only by humbling

itself that the soul may attain dissolution and annihilation in the divine Essence. It is impossible to reach high mystical states unless the individual self humbles itself before God and carries out His commands unconditionally, and this is not possible unless one thoroughly submits to the authority of His representatives and carries out their commands without hesitation.

> Spill wine on the prayer rug,
> If the sage so commands.
> For the seeker should not be ignorant
> Of the customs and ways of the stages
> Upon the spiritual path.
> Do not go near the neighbourhood of love
> Without a guide,
> For I tried to do it by myself a hundred times
> Without success.

It is for this reason that mystical knowledge is always accompanied by action. He who attains the heights of this form of insight shall find that his whole being has become spiritualized and his thoughts and actions have taken on the imprint of the Beloved. In contrast, intellectual knowledge is impotent and fruitless, in that it does not by itself lead to action nor requires any particular transformation on the part of the human soul; it affects the mind and not the heart. If one so wills, it is translated into action, and if not, it will remain in the storehouse of the mind and may even be accompanied with behaviour that directly contradicts it. This is the nature of all ordinary forms of knowledge, for they all deal with the mind and do not have the intrinsic power to shape one's behaviour. On the other hand, mystical knowledge naturally orients and forms the individual's behaviour and transforms it for the better. It can, therefore, be said that conventional forms of knowledge are like lights that illuminate the way for travellers, while mystical knowledge propels the seeker toward his objective, creating fervour, enthusiasm and movement.

> Intellectual knowledge is all loss,
> Hang on to love, the real knowledge.
> This knowledge frees you
> From multiplicity,
> While that knowledge steals your soul.
> This knowledge puts you upon the path
> That frees you from all idolatry,

Whether open or hidden.
This knowledge is free of how and why
For its source is the Most High. (*Shaykh Baha'e*)

In the holy Qur'an, where the word *'ilm* (knowledge) is used to signify the kind of insight that leads to seeking and action, reference is to mystical knowledge. For example, consider the following verses:

> It is only the wise who fear God. [213]
>
> When the Qur'an is recited before those who have already accumulated knowledge, they shall prostrate themselves and say: "holy is our Creator, verily His promise has been fulfilled." Then, they shall put their foreheads to the ground and their humility shall be increased.[214]
>
> God shall raise those who have faith and have gained knowledge to exalted stations. [215]

In many Qur'anic verses the terms 'reason' (*'aql*) and 'understanding' *fiqh*) are used in such a manner as to indicate mystical insight and are therefore accompanied by such concepts as guidance toward man's aim in life, self-purification and right action. For example, we have the following verses:

> Have they not traveled upon the earth, so that they may possess wise hearts and attentive ears? Verily, it is not eyes that are blinded, but hearts that are in breasts. [216]

> We have sent to Hell many men and jinn who did not use their hearts to know and their eyes to see and their ears to hear. They are like animals, maybe even more misled. They are the unheeding. [217]

> No one can believe in God unless He wills it. And none can contemplate Him until He has purified them. [218]

The reason for the fact that impurity is the result of a lack of contemplation (*ta'aqqul*) is that this form of contemplation is the path of purity, and those who try to travel this path without sincerity and purity will reap nothing but impurity from it. Mystical insight is a fruit of the purity referred to in the above verse, a purity that is accompanied by right action and practice. In any case, in the verses mentioned above, and in similar ones, contemplation, jurisprudence and knowledge refer to mystical insight,

and are therefore accompanied by practical effects. It is for this reason that this form of contemplation and understanding is considered by the Qur'an as a function of man's free will, and its loss is judged as the greatest sin committed by evil-doers. The denizens of Hell are quoted in the Qur'an in the following manner:

> The evil-doers in Hell said: "If we had listened and thought we would not now be among the residents of hell." Thus they confessed their sin. Shame and damnation be upon those who live in Hell. [219]

In Persian mystical literature this characteristic of mystical knowledge has received special attention and has been the subject of beautiful verses. For example, Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi discusses this issue on a number of occasions, the following being one instance:

> The knowledge of the men of spirit carries them,
> While the knowledge of those who are in bondage to the body
> Is a burden to them.
> When the heart attains knowledge it gains a friend;
> When the body acquires knowledge it only accumulates a burden.
> God said, "They bear books like a burden,"
> So, knowledge that is not of Him, is no more than a burden.
> Knowledge that does not come directly from God
> Will be no more permanent than makeup,
> But if you carry this burden well,
> It will be taken off your shoulders
> And you shall be granted joy and happiness.
> Do not carry about the burden of knowledge for selfish ends
> So that you shall ride the chariot of knowledge.
> When you ride the mount of knowledge
> The burden shall drop off your back.
> How are you going to free yourself from your
> Selfish desires, without the aid of divine knowledge,
> O you who are content to know only His name and not Himself?

The poem continues until we reach the following lines:

> Like iron, abandon yourself.
> By self-control, turn yourself into a spotless mirror.
> Rid yourself of all your particularities,

So that you may behold your pure essence.
You shall behold the knowledge of the prophets in your heart,
Without the help of books, schools or teachers. [220]

It should be pointed out here that the fact that mystical knowledge has a practical nature does not mean that those who gain it inevitably and invariably continue their journey upon the spiritual path. In other words, it does not cancel the seeker's free will and force him to ascend the higher rungs of the spiritual ladder, achieve proximity to God, and finally attain union with the Divine. On the contrary, in spite of having attained even the highest levels of spiritual illumination the seeker faces the ever-present danger of a sudden fall. In fact, the plunge from the heights of such spiritual knowledge is extremely terrible and painful, and is generally fatal and irreversible. If those who have succeeded in attaining the heights of spiritual knowledge, and before whose eyes the veils that hide profound and occult truths have been drawn aside, turn their backs on all that they have seen and tasted and descend from those exalted heights, their chances of salvation shall be slim indeed. Moreover, the higher the station they may have attained the more painful and devastating the fall shall be. The glorious Qur'an gives a number of instances in this regard, two of which are discussed below.

1. The first account concerns Bal'am bin Ba'awrā', a Jewish man of great learning who had reached very high levels of mystical insight, so much so that he is referred to as "he on whom We bestowed our signs." However, he ultimately turned his back on the Goal and, in spite of all the divine signs that had been granted him, retreated from the path he had travelled and therefore suffered a fall so terrible that it is referred to in the Qur'ān as 'mixing forever with the earth.'

    > Tell them the story of the man on whom We bestowed Our signs but he then withdrew from them and turned his back upon them. He was then misled by Satan and joined those who are lost. If We had wished, We could have raised him by those signs, but he turned toward the earth, mixed with it, and pursued his base desires. He is like a dog that barks whether you attack it or leave it alone. This is an example of those who turn their backs upon Our signs and reject them. Recount these stories to the people, perhaps it will make them reflect. [221]

2. The second story involves the followers of Jesus Christ. Although things work out well for them in the end, it points out the fact that

infidelity to the truth on the part of those who have attained genuine and high levels of spiritual knowledge is extremely hard and painful.

> His disciples asked him, "O Jesus, son of Mary, can your God send us a table full of food from the sky?" He answered, "Be pious if you have faith." They answered, "We wish to eat from that table so that our hearts are pacified by the truth, that we may have faith in the existence of God and bear witness to it." Jesus, son of Mary, then prayed thus: "O Lord, send us a table of food from the sky, so that it may be a feast for all, whether those who came before us or those who may come after us, and to be a sign of You. Provide for us, since You are the best of providers." God answered: "Verily, I shall send down to you this table laid with food, and after that if any of you should disbelieve, I shall punish him more severely than any other human being on this earth." [222]

The severity of the punishment for disbelief, that God promises shall follow the divine feast proves what was indicated above; namely, that the more profound the spiritual truths revealed, and the higher the level of certitude attained, the greater shall the damage and pain also be in case of a fall.

V: Mystical knowledge and love

Mystical knowledge is attachment, not description (it falls within the category of love, not representational knowledge).

> That science which can give you new life,
> Believe me, is the science of love. (*Shaykh Bahā'ī*)

In ordinary forms of (representational) knowledge, the relationship between the knower and the known is that of perception and description (*ḥikāyat*), and therefore does not require any form of unification or identification between the two. It can be likened to the relationship between a mirror and the objects it reflects. Mystical knowledge, however, requires such identification, since it is attachment and does not consist of perception and description. That is, the mystic disappears in his Beloved and this dissolution and annihilation, which is identical with attachment to the Beloved, is the real nature of mystical knowledge. This attachment and annihilation is that which is understood as love. The reality of love, then, is

none other than annihilation and dissolution of the individual self in the holy essence of the Supreme Truth through losing oneself entirely in one's love for Him. Attachment to any other thing is nothing but illusion and fantasy, and love for anything else is not true love but a passing infatuation:

> This cry of the flute is not wind, but fire.
> May he perish who is not ablaze with it. (*Rūmī*)

And:

> There is no room for contraries in the hermitage of the heart.
> Only when the demon has left will the angel come in. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

It is for the above-mentioned reason that mysticism can be defined as the science of becoming like the known to such a degree that one attains complete identification with it. At this stage the seeker is annihilated and dissolved in it. The ladder by which the seeker ascends towards this annihilation and dissolution in God is love. This ability to become like the Beloved, to love, and to liberate the soul from the material body, is a very special characteristic of man, something that no other creature, not even angels possess. The source of this love and spirituality is none other than the 'breathing' mentioned in the Qur'ān: "I breathed my spirit into him".[223] It is indeed this divine breath that is the cause of this tumult and uproar, and which drives man towards the Beloved.

> I do not know who is inside this weary-hearted breast,
> For though I am silent, He is in uproar and tumult. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

This is the same divine inspiration that has raised man from lifeless earth to the unique station of God's viceroy on earth, dressed him in the robe of honour, and made him worthy of veneration by angels.

> Last night I saw angels knocking on the door of the tavern,
> kneading the clay of man and soaking it in a wine cup.
> Residents of the most holy and chaste heaven
> Became drinking partners with me, a humble beggar.
> Heaven could not bear the burden of trust,
> So I, a madman, was chosen. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

Angels are manifestations of reason, and thus do not partake of love. With man's creation, love entered the world and gave it vitality, warmth and movement.

In the realm of reason things are undifferentiated and uniform. What exists and must exist exists and what does not exist and must not exist does not exist. That is all. But that being which is intermingled with nothingness arises out of non-existence and soars towards infinite being, is love. It transcends reason. It is in the realm of love where the visible and the invisible, the outward and the inward, matter and spirit, mix and God manifests Himself in the form of His Names. It is here that the universe comes to life, is filled with vitality, need and desire, giving rise to a movement that begins from the boundaries of non-existence and extends into infinity. In the words of *Hāfez*, it is love that has set the world aflame, filling it with passion, fervour and ecstasy.

> In pre-existence the rays of Your beauty dawned,
> So, love appeared and set the whole world ablaze.
> Your visage revealed itself for an instant,
> And seeing that there was no love in angels
> Was so offended that it turned into a flame and set man afire.
> Reason wanted to light a lamp from that fire,
> But the lightening of zeal threw the world into disarray.
> The pretender wanted to enter the abode of the mystery,
> But a hand emerged from the invisible realm
> And pushed the uninitiated away. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

Thus, angels, who are manifestations of reason, failed to understand the secret of Adam's creation, and God revealed this secret through the science of Names. The divine Names, as explained in numerous narrations, [26] are the holy spirits of the prophet Muhammad and his progeny. These are the manifestations of the divine Essence and perfect representations of divine love in the world of creation. It is indeed for this very reason that the way to pay back the Prophet Muhammad for his mission and teachings is love for him and his descendants. For the soul of external religious observances (*sharī'a*) is none other than the inner spiritual path (*ṭarīqa*). It is in this inner spiritual realization that the external observances bear fruit. Without this inner insight, man is nothing but a lifeless corpse. Finally, the inner path is true love alone and can be summed up in total obedience to the authority and guidance of Muhammad and his progeny.

> Without exertion you will get nowhere on this path;
> If you want to be rewarded, obey the master. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

And:

> Angels know nothing of love, do not waste your breath,
> Get a cup of wine and pour it upon the dust of man. (*Ḥāfeẓ*)

The Place of Mysticism (‘Irfān) within the Hierarchy of Islamic Sciences

Muhsin Araki,
Islamic Centre of England, UK

Abstract

This brief paper presents and locates the study and discourse of mysticism (*‘irfān*) within the wider context of the disciplines and sciences studied and practised in Islam. After a brief introduction to the sciences in Islam and the definition of a science, the author focuses on the relationship between mysticism and philosophy and their different examinations of the notion and reality of existence.

To ascertain and define the correct location for the study of mysticism, we need to explain three contextual issues. First, what is meant by the term ‘Islamic sciences’? Second, what are the features that are similar and what distinguishes mysticism from other Islamic sciences and disciplines? Third, how has mysticism developed with respect to these other sciences and how do they affect each other?

I: A general definition of Islamic sciences.

Islamic sciences (*‘ulum islāmiyya*) is a concept used in two senses.[224] The first sense is broadly understood. Islamic sciences, taken in their broad sense, encompass a constellation of disciplines, which have evolved in the context of Islamic civilisation, both ones which primarily developed from Islamic sources and principles, and those which already existed in other societies and civilizations (*‘ulum al-awā’il*) but which were integrated into, and flourished within Islamic civilisation. Islamic sciences in this broad sense embrace disciplines held in common among Islamic scholars in scientific and academic institutions in the Islamic world throughout

the history of Islam. Consequently, both original Islamic sciences such as jurisprudence, theology, principles of jurisprudence, exegesis of the Qu'rān and the life (sīra) of the Prophet and Imams and other sciences derived from other civilisations such as astronomy, medicine, mathematics, all of which fit in this broad category.

The second sense is narrower. This narrow definition embraces those disciplines, which originate directly from Islamic principles and sources, namely, the Qur'ān, the tradition (sunna) of the Prophet and Imams and the creed, which is derived from Qur'ān. This category of sciences is an innovation of Muslims and is, in fact, an illustration and interpretation of the tradition of the Prophet. The narrow category of Islamic sciences itself is divided into two groups. The first comprises those developed for the sole purpose of interpretation and elaboration of the meaning and purposes of the Qur'ān and the tradition of the Prophet. The second comprises those, which are considered an introduction to the former group, such as logic, Arabic literature and grammar, the history of Islam, sciences related to the understanding of Qur'ān, the science of recitation of Qur'ān and the science of verification of narrators of sayings of the Prophet and Imam ('ilm al-rijāl).

Islamic sciences are also divided into two categories on the basis of their methodology. They are either based on pure reasoning or derive their authority from religious sources. The first category, which is based on intellectual investigation, comprises the intellectual sciences (*'ulum* 'aqliyya). The second comprises the sciences based upon scriptural authority and exegesis (*'ulum* naqliyya). In the sciences derived from scripture, the authority of scriptural sources is the main basis for arguments. However, the degree of rational reasoning in these sciences varies. Disciplines such as transcendental philosophy (falsafa *ilāhiyya*), theoretical mysticism, logic and rational theology (*kalām 'aqlī*) employ only rational premises in their arguments. They clearly fall into the former category, while practical mysticism, scripturally-oriented theology, principles of jurisprudence (*usul* al-fiqh) and the exegesis of the Qur'ān are considered as scripturally-orientated sciences.

II: Similarities and differences between mysticism and other branches of Islamic sciences

Islamic sciences differ in their subject matter, purpose or methodology, or any of two or three of these factors. For example, theology is different from jurisprudence in terms of subject matter and purpose. The subject matter of theology is one's religious attitude towards human beings and the world, whereas the subject matter of jurisprudence is human agency vis-à-vis God, other humans and the world. The purpose of theology is to attain peace of mind and certainty in an uncertain world, while jurisprudence deals with

the conformity of our deeds in relation to the commands of God. On the other hand, unlike jurisprudence, rational theology follows a rational methodology and relies mainly only on 'reason' ('aql), while scripturally-orientated theology shares the methodology of jurisprudence employing a combined methodology of scripturally-orientated argument and pure 'reason'.

Islamic philosophy (metaphysics) and theology are also different in terms of subject matter and purpose. The subject matter of metaphysics is pure existence (al-*wujud bimā* huwa *wujud*), while the subject matter of theology is the existence of God (awareness of whose existence is essential). However, these two disciplines share the same methodology in achieving their objectives, which is pure reason. Our main aim here is to indicate the similarities and differences between Islamic mysticism and other disciplines within the Islamic sciences.

Categorisation of Islamic sciences into introductory and core disciplines, places mysticism into the core and fundamental category. It also comes under the category of rational sciences, although practical mysticism comes under the category of scriptural sciences. The inclusion of theoretical mysticism into the intellectual sciences indicates that this type of mysticism reinforces findings of intuition by rational reasoning, although the primary and main source intuition and knowledge is attained through the purity of heart. The results of such spiritual journeys are often confirmed by inductive reasoning. As a result of such a diversified methodology, we classify this type of knowledge as part of rational sciences.

One of the main principles of this discipline, upon which all scholars of *'irfān* agree, is that one has to follow a mentor in all phases of a spiritual journey. The honest and experienced leader who is chosen as guide on this journey must also be a friend of God (*wali Allāh*).[225] The greatest teacher and mentor on this spiritual journey to God is the Prophet of Islam, Muhammed (ṣ). He and his descendants are the greatest masters and mentors whom one has to follow in the spiritual quest for truth and the meaning of life. They are pioneers of knowledge and teachers of love, without whom one can go astray, as this endeavour can turn out be a very risky adventure without the guidance of the friends of God.

This interpretation is based on a Shi'i way of thinking that places reason at the forefront of its importance. A reference to authority in the Shi'i way of thinking is not convincing on its own. In the final analysis the authority rests on reason. On the other hand some schools of thought, mainly from Sunni branches of Islam attribute absolute authority to the practice of the Prophet and deny the role of reason.

The necessity of having a mentor on the spiritual path has been reiterated by great masters in this field. Rūmī (d. 1274), the great Sufi master and founder of the Mevlevi order of dervishes, in his exciting treatise Mathnavī-yi Ma'navī reminds us of this requirement when he says:

Follow the master (pīr) as without him
This journey is hazardous indeed
Therefore the way that you have not seen before
You should not go alone, do not disobey the mentor. [226]

Hāfiz (d. 1389), another famous authority in this field follows the same line when he says:

Do not walk into the quarter of love without a solid reason,
I have made hundreds of attempts but in vain.
Beware of this hazardous path without the guidance of Khezr,
It is darkness and the danger of going astray is present.

According to this important principle of *'irfān*, it is necessary to follow a friend or deputy of God. Following the holy Prophet and those who are closest to him as the friend of God is of utmost importance. Secondly, those who are most familiar with the practice and teachings of the Prophet and Imams are also appointed to lead people.

III: The difference between the problems of philosophy and *'irfān*

The idea of following the Prophet and other Saints implies that practical *'irfān* is a science based on scriptural authority. One can only follow them through an understanding of their practice and of the Holy Qur'ān. however, theoretical mysticism, philosophy and theology share common features as intellectual inquiries on the nature of existence. On the other hand, practical *'irfān* resembles ethics and jurisprudence as all three deal with human agency. Other Islamic sciences do not have any common ground with *'irfān* so they are excluded of this study.

The characteristic features of any discipline consist of four elements. First, methodology ascertains the modes of inquiry and method of verification. Second, subject matter (mawdu') defines the science because a 'science studies the essential properties of its subject matter'.[227] Third, the aporiai and issues (*masā'il, qādāyā*) involved characterise the discipline. Fourth, the purpose and telos (ghāya) of a science defines the aims of the inquiry. [228]

Theoretical *'irfān* employs a different methodology from that of philosophy and theology. Besides an inductive intellectual methodology, it relies mainly on intuition (*ishrāq*) and direct experience (dhawq). It prefers knowledge that is inspired by an understanding through the heart, rather than by logical reasoning. Because through intuition, a unity of subject of knowledge, knowledge itself and the holder of knowledge occurs (*ittihād*

al-'aql wa *l-'āqil wa l-ma'qūl*). On the contrary, the results of rational inquiry are only some reflections or cognitive images of the subject matter of knowledge and the very reality of the subject matter of knowledge itself is absent to the holder of knowledge.

Theoretical mysticism and theology are similar as both establish their results prior to any reasoning and then try to reinforce it through reasoning. However, they differ as the foundation of a priori knowledge in theology has religious authority and in theoretical 'irfān, knowledge is acquired through intuition.

With respect to subject matter, philosophy is different from theoretical 'irfān. The subject matter of philosophy is pure existence or existence qua existence. The subject matter of theoretical 'irfān, on the other hand, is God or a mode of existence whose absence is logically impossible to imagine, that is, the Necessary Existent (*wājib* al-wujud). Philosophy deals with existence in its pure form and attributes, regardless of the type of existence. Mysticism, however, focuses only on God and its existence, as other forms of existence, do not, in fact, exist, they are only a shadow of the existence, namely of God.[229] He is Existence and everything else is a reflection of His Existence. According to 'irfān, existence is equivalent to necessity of existence. That is to say that true existence is the one that is absolutely necessary to exist, that is God. The rest have an illusory existence.

The subject matter of theology includes issues related to the origin of creation, resurrection, Prophethood, leadership and related subjects. The very existence of God and His attributes constitute the subject matter of mysticism. However, mysticism is not concerned with proving the existence of God, which is beyond its sphere. No discipline is required to prove the existence of its subject matter. The existence of God is taken for granted in mysticism and it is the function of onto-theology or theology to prove the existence of God. The mere fact that God exists is a philosophical question, as necessity is among the attributes of existence.

General conceptions are not the same in mysticism and philosophy. In philosophy, existence is divided into categories such as diversity and unity, causality, essence and attributes, eternity and incipience, and necessary (inherent) or possible existence. However, in mysticism with its assumption of monorealism (wahdat al-wujud), these categories of existence do not make any sense. The different forms and colours of existence are illusory because there is unity in existence. Only one reality exists.

In philosophy, one considers general notions. Through a deductive abstraction process, the mind proceeds to conceptualise some general notions, which do not have reference in concrete existence. The first phase of such process takes place by forging a general concept, which is applicable to tangible and real subjects. For instance, the concept of a 'cat' is deduced from the many or one real cats, but this general concept is not

equivalent to our image of any individual cat. It is a general concept, which embraces the common features of cats and ignores their peculiarities. This conceptualisation may even go further and imply a secondary concept, such a 'animal'. There is an even more sophisticated conceptualisation when we deduce logical categories such as 'generality', 'necessity', 'causality' and so on. These are either logical or philosophical secondary concepts (*ma'qulāt thāniyya mantiqiyya* aw falsafiyya).

Ṣadr al-Dīn Muhammad Shīrāzī (d. 1641) known as Mullā Sadrā, a philosopher of the Safavid renaissance in Iran, ended the controversy between philosophy and Irfan when he introduced his transcendental philosophy combining elements from the two camps.[230] The originality of his contribution lies in his existentialist theory (not to be confused with modern European existentialism)[231] according to which the boundaries of existence that make up the identity of things are considered secondary to existence itself. In his theory of the pyramid of existence (hiram-i hastī), all beings share existence as such but their differences stem from the degree or intensity of their existence. God's existence in this pyramid has no limit and boundary. Therefore, his identity is identical to His existence. According to this understanding, the differences between philosophy and 'irfān are reconciled. There is diversity (degrees of existence) within the unity (all beings share existence).[232] This is the doctrine of *tashkik al-wujud*, or gradation and modulation of existence.[233]

IV: The constancy of existence

Is existence static or dynamic? If it is dynamic, how can it be constant and continue? If existence is constant, what is the impact of the mind? Classical Islamic philosophers believed that if a created being and the cause for its existence existed, that being should continue to exist regardless of the passage of time. In fact, they thought that, despite the passage of time, being maintains its identity (huwiyya). Mysticism does not agree with this way of thinking. Within 'irfān, there is no such continuity and existence is renewed constantly. They assume new identities as time goes by. It is our imagination that tries to ignore this fundamental transformation. Existence is, therefore, a process of becoming.

This disagreement between philosophical and mystical approaches was resolved by Mullā Ṣadrā through his theory of the transitory nature of substance (haraka jawhariyya). He argues that although fluid existence undergoes constant change, there is one factor that goes through this stretched existence across time. It is existence itself, which is present at all of these moments of change. Again the dynamic and static aspects of existence are reconciled.

Love in 'Irfān

Muhsin Araki,
Islamic Centre of England, UK

Abstract

This short article examines the role and presentation of love in Islamic mysticism, illustrated by the verse of major Sufi poets. Love is the way of the mystic who seeks to efface himself in his beloved in the *unio mystica*. An important aspect of mysticism in Islam is the way of love, of the fidèles d'amour as the late Henry Corbin put it. He describes love as a central feature of the tripartite relationship between God, man and the cosmos.

'Irfān (Islamic mysticism) as a discipline is a commitment and mystical intuition, and not merely a theory. In his endeavour, the *'ārif* annihilates himself in his beloved. This annihilation, which is the manifestation of true commitment, is the reality of cognition in *'irfān*. The fusing of total commitment with absolute annihilation is known as 'love'.[234] Accordingly, *'irfān* becomes the 'science of love' or the 'art of loving', but a very special love for a very special beloved, the most beautiful and the most complete. As Shaykh Bahā'ī (d. 1621) says:

> A science that gives you a new life
> Is the science of love, so listen to me?

Within the spiritual journey, the way of *'irfān* is nothing but serving the beloved.

Hāfiz says:

> The wrangling and the noise of the madrasa have occupied me,
> Let me be with the beloved and the wine for a while.

Apart from the art of loving, no other art or knowledge can lead one to the beloved.

Again Hāfiz has stated:

I am preoccupied with the art of loving and hope that
This noble art would not lead me stray, the way other arts did.

What is Love?

Love in this context cannot be defined in terms of abstract mental definition. It can only be explained by one's heart and experience. By attaining love, the heart can comprehend abstract mental concepts.

Whatsoever I say in exposition of love
When I come to love it, I am ashamed of that explanation.
Although verbal commentaries are more precise and eloquent
Yet love detached from any commentary is clearer.
Whilst the pen was making haste in writing,
It split upon itself as soon as it came to love.
Intellect lay down helplessly from describing love.
It was Love that gave the true account of love and loving.
The proof of the sun is the sun.
And if you require the proof, then do not turn away from it.[235]

Because love as a concept is not of a theoretical nature like other issues, it is very difficult to define. We cannot use mental concepts or abstract ideas to construct a framework by which love can be fully described. In general, because definable concepts are similar in some respects and dissimilar in others to real occurent issues, they can be described and defined. This contrast of commonality and distinction that exist within the nature of these realities can be used by the mind to create a boundary and present a perceivable definition that constitutes a mental picture of that reality. With such a mental picture, one can separate one concept from others. But 'love' like 'existence' has no similitude or equivalent. Hence the above method, or the use of contrast, cannot be utilised to construct a perceivable definition for 'love'.

Like 'existence', 'love' is unique. It has no opposite or contrary. Accordingly, no concept can be found that in some respect has some similarity and in others it is opposite to love. What we have stated earlier about the impossibility of defining love should not be misinterpreted into believing that love cannot be perceived. Love can be comprehended from the external signs that accompany it. These external signs and indicators;

though cannot be taken as the true definition of love, they can, however, be used to familiarise the mind with this unique reality.

There are three major signs of love: attachment and devotion, perception and understanding, pleasure and delight.

Where there is no commitment, there is no love; where there is no understanding, there is no love; and where pleasure and ecstasy are absent, love is absent too. Whenever two things are consciously bound to each other and their attachment brings joy and happiness, then, there is love. The above suggestions can be used in defining love as conscious and wilful attachment of two things that leads to pleasure and joy. For a lover, love manifests itself in the form of intense and thrilling attachment to the beloved, and in the beloved, love reveals itself in the form of willing attraction and contentment. The attachment of a lover to the beloved stems from the affinity and needs of a lover for the beloved. An intelligent and wise lover, who is conscious of the fact that his total existence is linked to the beloved, would experience this affection and attachment with all his soul. Within him, he would sense a gratifying attraction towards his beloved. This delightful and pleasing ecstasy that is patent within the soul of the lover is nothing but love.

Love is a mutual attraction

Love is a deliberate and reciprocal relationship between two things, and it is the consequence of attraction and allure from one side and desire and struggle from the other. This unique characteristic cannot be a one-sided affair. This relationship is not only a reciprocal affinity; it is a complementary one as well. That is, as the intensity of desire and allure increases, the degree of attraction and affinity increases too.

Let us explain this mutual relationship. The creator of the world, who is, the most Perfect Beloved, showered all his creatures, with His bounties. This type of all embracing bounties from the Almighty Allah is expressed as divine compassion (*raḥmat-i raḥmānī*) within the language of revelation, within *'irfān*, however, they have been called great self-disclosures (*tajallī-yi a'ẓam*).[236] The reciprocal response given to these blessing by the creatures or beings establishes their position within the hierarchy of existence. The quality of an entity's response will qualify it for a particular statue within the path of perfection. Divine love also has a bearing on these reactions, each being, depending on its particular position within the hierarchy of existence, benefits accordingly from this mutual attraction and divine love, which, in turn, generates excitement and ecstasy within the nature of that being.

Man's place within the hierarchy of love

When it comes to divine love and its hierarchy, man possesses a very unique status. He is permitted to attain the position of witnessing (*shuhūd*) and ultimate presence (*maqām-i qurb*) before Allah. Put differently, the door to eternal perfection is left open for man. This is why human love, particularly within the divine domain can develop itself.

The first stage within human love is the sense of need (*niyāz*) that motivates man to struggle. This realisation is the first flame of love and that once kindled, could take man up to immortality. The source for the realisation of needs is nothing but the general all encompassing Divine Mercy (*fayḍ-i ilāhī*) that everything and everyone was showered with them. Man's advance within the hierarchy of divine love depends on his response to the realisation of needs. This realisation in turn makes it necessary for man to surrender himself to the beloved. Some are able to do that selflessly and, before the beloved, they see nothing of their own self. They have no desires and no self. Their only wish is to see Him and seek nothing but Him. His Love and His remembrance is the only thing they value. In the Holy Qur'*ā*n, these groups of people are indicated in the verse 'and those foremost in faith will be foremost in the Hereafter'.[237]

Devotees are not a homogenous group. Even within those who have reached the highest degree in spiritual understanding, there is a hierarchy. Where the most elevated are those who abandoned themselves first and most to their Beloved. Those who by saying yes first affirmed their total Love for Him. The most complete and the foremost devotee of the path of divine love is none other than the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*Ṣ*). He is the leader and for his devotion, he occupies the first place in the Kingdom of Heaven. The Holy *Qur*'ān reminds humanity of the unique position held by the Holy Prophet in the path of devotion by saying:

> Say: (O Muhammad) truly my prayers and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death are all for Allah the Cherisher of the worlds. No partner has He: This I am commanded and I am the first of those who bow to His Will.[238]

Hāfiz expressed this theme eloquently by saying:

> A star twinkled and became the moon of our meeting.
> It became a close companion to our unruly heart
> My sweetheart who was never schooled and never learned to write
> With a wink, became the master of a hundred scholars.

Apart from that intoxicating narcissus, may God protect it from all evil eyes?
No one sat comfortably under this blue dome
My life be a sacrifice for his mouth, as within this garden
No other bud better decorated and adorned the lawn of existence
Although the sellers of charm have come to display their beauties
But no one can reach the charm and attraction of our sweetheart.

Here, Hāfiz is describing the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Ṣ). He uses poetic expressions like 'our beloved who was never schooled', 'intoxicating narcissus who has the most elevated position in this universe' or 'within the garden of Divine Manifestation no other bud had been created better' to describe the personality of the Holy Prophet and express his admiration for the Prophet. In these couplets, the mystic poet Hāfiz of Shiraz, describes the most honourable Messenger of Islam, Prophet Muhammad (Ṣ). The beloved one who was not taught in a school (*maktab*), and did not write a line, but by a single amorous glance, became the teacher of hundreds; the intoxicating narcissus who attained perfection beyond the reach of all; the blossom whose beauty the gardener and decorator of the world, created as the manifestation of his own divine beauty. He is but the friend of God, the chosen Muhammad, peace be upon him and his household. When Hāfiz says 'No secret-holder can rank with our thanksgiving friend', he plainly refers to the Qur'ānic verse given in the previous page in which by thanksgiving it is meant supplication and prayer of the Messenger of God and by straightforwardness it is meant monotheism and the fact that he was the first Muslim, the one who surrenders to the will of God.

After the most honourable Messenger, come his household and after them the prophets and the truthful, and then other saints and pious people. Inanimate creatures, too, love the Supreme Being; their being controlled and conquered by man, is their annihilation to seek his pleasure.

The Essential Beloved and the accidental beloved.

Almighty God is the Essential Beloved and is the most beautiful and perfect. Other beings are all manifestations of his Perfection, Glory and Beauty. The Chosen Muhammad (Ṣ) represents God's most perfect Beauty and Glory. He is at the top of the chain of divine perfection and glory of God and after him come his household, then other honest and faithful human beings. In this way, the chain of beings starts with the most perfect and continues to the most imperfect beings.

In the connected chain of being, the essential love of the Supreme Being transcends the love of every other perfect being, comes to the love

of the Messenger of God and his household—as they are the most perfect manifestations of God's Divine Perfection and Glory—and passes them and reaches the Almighty God. No love is a true love of God except that it passes through the love of *Muhammad* and his household. Any love that does not pass through this stage is not a love but a mere gesture or pretension. In mystical terminology, a pretender is one who pretends to love but is barren of love.

In the connected chain of love, *Muhammad* and his household who are the most perfect of God's servants are accidental beloveds because God's divine perfection and beauty have, in their most complete form, been endowed to them.

> The well-known messenger from the place of my Love,
> Got me the amulet with her notes;
> Well it reveals Love's glory and beauty,
> Well it reiterates Love's dignified anecdotes.

The Beloved, the starting point of love.

The starting point of love is the beloved; also the end of love is the beloved, though in fact, there is no end to love. Love that terminates is not love. In true love, the end of every stage is the beginning of a new stage. There is no end to the school of love. The students of the school of love attain a new level having passed the previous levels. They come to a new stage, having passed the previous stages. The starting point in love is the beloved herself. The beloved with her coquetry, manifestation, and gesture, adds fuel to the fire burning inside the lover and fans this fire with her amorous glance.

Almighty God, when creating human beings, flamed the fire of love in his being and this was the starting point of love. The love of God for his own Essential Perfection and Beauty was the cause of the creation of this world, which mirrors God's Beauty, Perfection and Glory.[239] Man was the highest manifestation of God's Glory and Perfection. Man, the inexperienced lover, endowed with sparks of love sought to find God fervently, but the distance between him and God was more than he had thought. Adam's fault that led to his expulsion from heaven, taught him to have a solid and strong will and be more persevering in the way to reach God. To attain absolute perfection and to reach the final destination, man needs to have a present fervour, which is always fresh. Therefore, God has put man to test in every stage of the way so that he recognises his deficiencies and realises the long distance he needs to go. In this way, at every stage a new fire is inspired in man's being so that he keeps going on the way to absolute perfection. Hāfiz says:

Arise, oh Cupbearer! And bring
To lips that are thirsting the bowl they praise,
For it seemed that love was an easy thing,
But my feet have fallen on difficult ways.

The Holy *Qur*'ān says:

> Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, 'we believe', and that they will not be tested?[240]

The arc of the descent and ascent of Love

The starting point of love is the beloved. In mystical love, Almighty God with His Absolute Perfection and Beauty is the starting point of love. From this point, which is the beginning of love, love's light has been cast over everything everywhere. The truth of the world consists of the shining of the light of divine love over and onto the tablet of the inner nature of the creatures. In other words, with the shining of the divine light, whatever had the capability and potentiality of existence came to be and its share of being is the same as its share of love allocated to it.

It is only love that connects the creatures of the world together and there is nothing but love in the world. The world was created with love and it is with love that all the creatures in the world were unanimously connected and joined together. It is with love that all the imperfect creatures of the world are in an indefatigable struggle to attain perfection and are on the move to seek their favourite.

The beloved is the beginning point of love. Love began from her. In other words, the first lover of perfection is the absolute perfection. He was in love with perfection and beings came to be because of this love. Being is the result of the love of the Creator for His own perfection. The Universe and its beings are the mirror reflecting the most perfect perfection and the most beautiful beauty. No mirror can reflect and uncover the perfection and beauty of the Creator as the Universe. Hāfiz says:

Your ray of beauty came forth from thy Manifestation in the earliest days,
Love appeared and set the world on fire!

Elsewhere he says:

O Saki, set my glass afire
With the light of wine! Oh minstrel, sing:

The world fulfils my heart's desire!
Reflected within the goblet's ring
I see the glow of my Love's red cheek,
And scant of wit, ye who fail to seek
The pleasures that wine alone can bring!
He cannot perish whose heart does hold
The life love breathes—though my days are told,
In the Book of the World lives my constancy.

Saki, or cupbearer, and minstrel are references to the *awliyā'* (or friends) of God who pour the sweet nectar of God's love into the mouths of people and with their intoxicating and divine message and sayings kindle the flame of fervour and divine love in the hearts. The bowl into which the wine of divine love is poured is the natural world and the image of the beloved is reflected in it.

Before this green dome and glass I came to be,
My eyes were sheltered in the eyebrow arc of thee.
From the dawn of the earliest days to the supper of the unlimited age,
Friendship and attachment were based on mutual pledge.
Love's shadow always sheltered the lover,
She was keen on us, we in need of her.

In this piece of gnostic lyric poetry, divine love is an eternal truth that existed before the creation of this material world. It was the attraction of the divine love that brought us to this world. The secret of love inside us is a shadow of the beloved causing a mutual amorous relation. On the one side of this mutual relation is the need and on the other, fervour's attraction; He longs for us and we need Him.

Therefore, as was referred to earlier, the path of love is bilateral; it starts from the beloved and continues with the rhapsodic need of the lover. The longing of the beloved for the lover comprises love's descending arc and the need of lover for the beloved, its ascending one.

Lover's ascending arc delineates the need of the imperfect for the perfect and love's descending arc delineates the fervour of the perfect to show and manifest itself at all various degrees of perfections from the highest to the lowest. In the language of *waḥī* or revelation, by love's descending arc, which is the absolute, perfect love for the lower degrees of perfection, is meant *salām* or peace and *raḥmat* or mercy; by love's ascending arc, which is the love of all creatures specially man for the Absolute Being, it is meant *zikr* or remembrance, *'ibādat* or supplication and *tā'at* or obedience to God.

In the following Qur'ānic verse, loves ascending and descending arc has been beautifully outlined:

> O ye who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. And glorify Him early and late. He it is Who blesseth you, and His angels (bless you), that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light; and He is ever Merciful to the believers. Their salutation on the day when they shall meet Him will be: Peace. And He hath prepared for them a goodly recompense.[241]

Supplication, remembrance and obedience to God show the love affair of those enthusiastic lovers who emotionally burn to meet with the Friend; the mercy and divine *salām* or peace are the benevolent pull and attraction of the beloved who sweetens the mouth of the impatient lover and kindles the flame of his love.

In the ascending and descending arc of love which encompasses the Universe, every creature has a special status, every creature, appropriate to its share of perfection, is somewhere on this connected chain and has a certain degree. Every creature that enjoys a higher perfection will enjoy love's attraction more and has a higher position in the chain of love. The higher a creature's perfection, the higher its fervour and love towards a perfection above itself. The highest point is to occupy the highest position in the phenomenon world. At that point which is occupied by the most perfect of Almighty God's creatures, there exists nothing but the annihilation of the lover into the beloved. The pure essence of the Chosen Muhammad—peace be upon him—is the manifestation of this perfect creature, who is annihilated in divine love. The result of the absolute annihilation of the pure essence of Muhammad in the essence of the Absolute beloved—who is the beginning of the creation and is the Creator of the world—is the manifestation of all divine glory and beauty in the Muhammadan essence, which has a humane and corporal body. The complete annihilation of the Muhammadan essence into the existence of the Almighty, has been reflected in many different ways in the verses of the holy Qur'ān. For example, the holy Qur'ān describes the Almighty God as:

> Lo! My Lord is on a straight path.[242]

This means that God Almighty is the criterion of the truth and right. Also, to describe the honourable prophet, the Chosen Muhammad (Ṣ), the holy Qur'ān says:

> I swear by the Quran full of wisdom,
> Most surely you are one of the messengers.[243]

The straight Muhammadan path, which represents the manifestation of God's pleasure and his holy appearance, shows itself, at lower degrees, in the existence of other prophets and saints. The holy *Qur*'ān says:

> Keep us on the right path.
> The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours.[244]

By God's blessing which has been endowed on the *awliyā'* (or the saints), is meant his full blessing which is the blessing of full love. The result of full love is the annihilation of the self in obeying Almighty God and full humility in seeking His Pleasure. Those people blessed with God's blessings are divided into four groups with every group superior to the other:

> And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger, these are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours from among the prophets and the truthful and the martyrs and the good, and a goodly company are they![245]

This interconnection between the degrees of love and attachment encompasses all the creatures. Every creature in this world has a share of love. From one side, it loves its superior and from the other, is the beloved of the being beneath itself. In this way, the organisation of the world of being, has been set up by means of love and been founded on the basis of love.

Love and *Valāyat* (guardianship)

As it was said before, in the connected chain of the creatures in the universe, every creature loves the superior being above itself. This love is essentially the love of God and accidentally the love of the superior above. Because of the love of every creature for the being above itself, the attention and mercy of the superior gets directed towards the one underneath. This mutual relation of love and mercy is what we call '*valāyat*' or guardianship. Guardianship is the same as love but in the outside world and love is guardianship but in the inner world. Guardianship is the manifestation and appearance of the inner love.

Almighty God is the essential beloved and guardianship belongs to him; that is to say that he only has the right to summon, command or prohibit people. The right to command or prohibit, which forms the real essence of guardianship stems from Almighty God's holy essence, which is the most perfect, the most beautiful and the real beloved. As God Almighty is the most perfect and is the source of all perfection, he only has the right to command, prohibit, guide and order. He only chooses the most perfect human being as his successor and gives him the right to command, prohibit

and order. In this way, the connected chain of divine love is a chain that connects all objects through the guardianship of the perfect guardian to Almighty God and thus all creatures that are full manifestations of divine glory and perfection, are also the full manifestations of divine guardianship. Therefore, through the passage of guardianship, love reaches God Almighty; and every love that does not pass through this passage is not connected to God: in other words, it is not, in truth, the love of God.

True Love and Figurative Love (*'ishq haqiqī wa majzāī*)

From what was discussed here, it was understood that love is an enjoyable and conscious attachment that starts from the beloved and is realised in a guardianship relation when the lover surrenders to the will and request of the beloved. In the sensory world, love appears as an ardent and exciting attachment. Therefore, love starts from the beloved who is perfect; love leaves the lover, whose whole being is in need of the beloved, in the everlasting attraction and struggle (to get to the beloved). Therefore, true love never terminates; whatever terminates is not true love. The thirst of the true lover is never quenched; and he whose thirst for the beloved is quenched is not a lover.

In figurative love which comprises the feeling of attachment to something one is in need of, whenever the lover reaches the thing to which he felt an attachment, his emotions towards that thing subside and the fire of his need towards that thing becomes cold. If any feelings and emotions are left to him, they are for things over and above the first-beloved. The cooling and subsiding of feelings show the figurativeness of the love.

From the point of view of the gnostics and mystics, figurative love is not unrelated to the true love. Rather, figurative love has been derived from the very true love, which is the love of Absolute Perfection. However, because of the interference of the element of imagination—which is activated by various factors such as lust and passion in the human psyche—man mixes up a thing that is not his favourite and true beloved for the true beloved. That is why, when he attains it, he does not find it as his agreeable and favourite goal. He, therefore, turns away from it and starts a new struggle to attain his true beloved. If he is still controlled by his imaginative power, which stems from lust, wrath and other animal desires, he will continue with his original mistake. He will not get anything but the loss of his lifetime. This is exactly the very 'loss', to which the Holy Qur'ān refers:

> I swear by the time, most surely man is in loss, except those who believe and do good, and enjoin on each other truth, and enjoin on each other patience.[246]

On the Four Journeys
(*Risālat taḥqīq fī l-Asfār al-Arba'a*)

Sayyid Abu l-Hasan Rafī'ī Qazvīnī (d. 1975)
Trans./annot. Sayyid Sajjad Rizvi, University of Exeter, UK

Abstract

This brief article presents the explanatory gloss of a famous twentieth century teacher of Islamic philosophy, Sayyid Abū l-Hasan Rafī'ī Qazvīnī (d. 1975) on the four journeys of the mystic that the philosopher Mullā Sadrā Shīrāzī (d. 1641) introduces at the beginning of his *summa* of that name. He explains the relationship and correspondence of these stages of the mystic's journey to the subject matter and arrangement of the work *al-Asfār al-Arba'a*, taking as his cue the statement of the four journeys at the culmination of the introduction to the text. Although many thinkers have written glosses on the meaning of the four journeys, Sayyid Abū l-Ḥasan's comments are some of the more illuminating and subtle expositions of Sadrian philosophy and its intimate grasp of the key relationship between mysticism and philosophy as complementary modes of noetic inquiry.

At the onset of the discussion on ontology and onto-theology in his *magnum opus*, *al-Asfār al-arba'a*, Mullā Ṣadrā says:

> Know that the wayfarers (*sullāk*) among the mystics (*al-'urafā'*) and saints (*al-awliyā'*) undergo four journeys.
>
> The first journey is from the creation to the Truth (*min al-khalq ilá l-Haqq*).
>
> The second journey is through the Truth in the Truth (*bi l-Ḥaqq fī l-Haqq*).
>
> The third journey is the opposite of the first because it is from the Truth to creation (*min al-Haqq ilá l-khalq*).

> The fourth journey is the opposite of the second in a sense because it is by the Truth in creation (*bi l-Haqq fī l-khalq*).
>
> I have arranged the order of this book of mine, according to their movement through the (higher) lights and the effects, into four journeys. I have called it the Transcendent Philosophy (*al-Hikma al-muta'āliya*) of the four journeys of the intellect; and I shall pour forth (my words) on my subject with the help of the existent eternally worshipped Truth (*Haqq, bud al-samad al-mawjud*).[247]

This is the propaedeutic and premiss for the naming of the text, a philosophical summa imbued with mysticism and intuitive philosophy, and for providing a mystical paradigm and metaphor for explaining the pursuit of philosophy in terms of the mystic's journey to God.

Most commentators on this work have begun with the discussion of the meaning of this passage as a way of understanding how the text works and discerning its aims and method. The edition of the work includes the three renown philosophers of the Qajar period, namely, Aqā Muhammad Ridā Qumshehī (d. 1889), Mīrzā Mu*h*ammad Hasan Nūrī and the most famous of them all Mullā Hādī Sabzavārī (d. 1873).[248] The glosses of Qumshehī and Sabzav*ārī* are eloquent expositions of philosophical inquiry in Sufi language and locate the Sadrian enterprise within the theoretical Sufi framework of the mystic's path. N*ūrī*'s glosses, appropriately for a renown logician, are more in keeping with a discursive method of exposition.[249]

My translation is based on the Arabic text published in a collection of treatises of Sayyid Abu l-Hasan Rafī'ī called *Ghawṣī dar baḥr-i ma'rifat* or Plunging in the sea of gnosis.[250] The eminent contemporary philosopher-mystic of Qum, Ayatullāh Hasan Hasanzāda Amulī transcribed the text. Square brackets indicate the place in the Arabic text. The translation will be in italics, interspersed with my commentary.

Text

[233] In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Compassionate. He [Mullā Ṣadrā] said: Know that wayfarers undergo four journeys. Know that the wayfarer to God, exalted be His glory and greatness, leaves this realm of multiplicity ('ālam al-kathra), not in a locative sense, after tracing the waystations (manāzil) of the soul (al-nafs) and purifies it (the soul) of its passions, and is sincerely dedicated to God in all his acts, whether words or actions or thoughts or desires. He arrives in the realm of unicity ('ālam

al-aḥadiyya) and sees all others plunged in the rays of the light of the Truth and His theophanies (al-Ḥaqq wa tajalliyyātihi).

The author clearly juxtaposes the multiplicity and spatio-temporal aspects of this phenomenal world of ours with the noetic world of reality that is beyond that is devoid of space and time. The journey of the mystic therefore takes places in that noetic sphere and in that sense is 'non-locative'. It is the 'journey of the heart'.[251] It is the way of union that the mystic seeks.[252] This noetic journey has clear Platonic and Neoplatonic precedents and the premiss that this world of multiplicity is lesser and less perfect than the archetypal noetic world of unity is also a common Platonic assumption. The ability for the soul to 'doff' the body and ascend to the realm of the *nous* and experience beatific vision is similarly assumed. Plotinus articulates this doffing metaphor in *Enneads* IV.8.1, a text that found its way into the Arabic epitome and paraphrase of *Enneads* IV-VI better known as the '*Theologia Aristotelis*' (*Ūthūlūjīyā*).[253]

Earlier Sufi writings allude to the four journeys. Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240) in his *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* refers to them in chapter sixty-nine on the secrets of prayer as the 'spiritual ascent of man'.[254] Although they do not map onto the Sadrian journeys perfectly, they have the same motifs.[255] Two of his commentators, however, retain concepts of these journeys that bear a closer resemblance and influence on Mullā Sadrā. 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī (d. 1330) in his influential lexicon of Sufi terms, *al-Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, discusses these four journeys.[256] Sabzavārī is his gloss makes the direct connection and quotes the whole section:

> [A] journey is the attention of the heart towards the Truth, the Most High. There are four journeys. The first is the journey to God from the waystations of the soul (*manāzil al-nafs*), arriving at the Clear Horizon (*al-ufuq al-mubīn*).[257] This is the culmination of the station of the heart (*maqām al-qalb*) and the beginning of the self-disclosures of the [divine] Names (*al-tajalliyāt al-asmā'iyya*).
>
> The second is the journey in God with regard to His attributes and realising His Names, [ascending] to the Highest Horizon *(al-ufuq al-a'lá) and the culmination of the presence of singularity* (*al-ḥadra al-wāḥidiyya*).
>
> The third is the ascent to Union (*al-jam'*) and the presence of unicity (*al-ḥadra al-aḥadiyya*). This is the station of the 'two bows' length', and if he is raised further, then it is the station of 'or less'[258] and that is the culmination of sanctity (*al-wilāya*).

> The fourth is the journey from God through God to achieve perfection and it is the station of subsistence after annihilation and the separation after the union (*al-farq ba'd al-jam'*).[259]

Sayyid *Hayder* Amulī (d. after 1385), a major conduit for the school of Ibn 'Arabī in Shi'i intellectual circles, also talks of these four journeys in his magnum opus, *Jami' al-Asrār*[260] Commentators on the *Asfār* have made the connection with this Sufi tradition. Indeed the connection between philosophy and mysticism in the metaphor of 'journey' might even pre-date Mullā Ṣadrā in the work of the sixteenth century thinker, Shams al-Dīn Khafarī.[261]

One final point concerns the term 'waystation' (*manzil*). This is a technical Sufi term and more generally as Qumshehī asserts a term for a stop along a path, a fleeting moment to pass beyond.[262]

There is the beginning of the station (maqām) of the heart and the culmination of the first journey, which is the journey from creation to the Truth. The being of the wayfarer becomes 'real' (ḥaqqānī) and contingency (al-jiha al-imkāniyya) fades from him. Thus when the heart of the believer is 'in the hands of the Merciful and He inclines it as He wills', he (the mystic) contemplates His highest attributes and His greatest Names, both the Names of Grace and of Wrath (al-lutfiyya wa l-qahariyya). From the very seat of his being, the judgements of the divine names in their multiplicity are manifest in him. This is known as the station of singularity (maqām al-wāḥidiyya). He is in the station of contraction and expansion (maqām al-qabḍ wa l-basṭ) that manifest the judgements of Grace and Wrath, and he undergoes fear and hope (al-khawf wa l-rajā') in it (that state). This is the (second) journey by the Truth in the Truth.

The author juxtaposes the level of unicity (*al-aḥadiyya*) and singularity (*al-wāḥidiyya*), terms used within the contexts of the theory of divine presences (*al-ḥaḍarāt*) in the thought of Ibn 'Arabī.[263] Sabzavārī explains the distinction:

> The level of unicity describes the divine essence negated of the divine names and attributes. But the level of singularity describes the divine essence deployed with the divine names and attributes manifest in the permanent archetypes (*al-a'yān al-thābita*) of things.[264]

Two other themes are prominent. First, the Sufi language of stations is used to describe points along the path to God. The names of these stations are standard as used in Sufi manuals such as *al-Risāla* of al-Qushayrī (d.

1074).[265] They also intersect with the cosmology of subtle substances (*laṭā'if*) or levels of the self from the awareness of the human self ascending up to the True Self who is the One. Sabzavārī makes this connection explicit in his discussion of the seven subtle substances as stations along the spiritual path. He further connects them to an interpretation of the level of disclosure in the famous light verse of the Qur'ān 24: 25.[266] Second, *yin* and *yang* aspects of God, *jalāl* (*mysterium tremendum*) and *jamāl* (*mysterium fascinans*). are compared. His grace and wrath are juxtaposed. This theology of balance suggests that all contrariety and balance in the cosmos emanates from the '*tao*' of God's attributes.[267]

[234] He is in the Truth because the lordly realm (al-'ālam al-rubūbī) is vast and the perfect attributes are many in concept and each one of them rules over the existence of the servant. He is through the Truth because when the servant is free of the rule of contingency and is under the control of the rays of the light of the Truth, then he exists through the Truth and not through himself. Rather he has no 'ego' (anāniyya) in this level (of being). He arrives in the second journey to the culmination of the station of his path and its developments from one state to another (min ḥālin ilá ḥāl), he contemplates all the divine attributes rolled up in the Unseen Unity that is specific to His Necessary Essence (ghayb al-waḥda al-mukhtaṣṣa bi-dhātihi l-wājibiyya). He ascends to essential annihilation (al-fanā' al-dhātī) but he does not see pure Truth (al-Ḥaqq al-maḥḍ) and absolute unicity (al-aḥadiyya al-muṭlaqa). Grace and wrath become one for him and reward and punishment are the same for him since both of them are expressions of a special name as reward is as aspect of His Mercy and punishment as aspect of His wrath. The attributes perish in His Unseen Essence in this station. All that the wayfarer contemplates is the Unseen Divine Ipseity (al-huwiyya al-ghaybiyya al-ilāhiyya).

A key feature of mystical language is the use of *coincidentia oppositorum*, the juxtaposition of paradoxical language, which can clearly be noticed here. Corbin drew attention to its use in Sufism and later Islamic philosophy in Iran.[268]

This is pure self-effacement (al-maḥw al-maḥḍ) and sheer obliteration (al-ṭamas al-ṣirf) and the culmination of the station of the heart and the beginning of the manifestation of (the station) of the spirit (al-rūḥ) in the words of the mystics. Thus he perceives divine providence (al-'ināya al-'ilāhiyya) and reverts to self-consciousness (al-ṣaḥw) after the self-effacement.[269] *He contemplates the creation and the contingent realm but with another eye and a different vision and a contemplation that is unlike the contemplation of the veiled ones. Rather, he contemplates contingent quiddities (al-māhiyyāt al-imkāniyya) as manifestations of His names and as theophanies of His attributes and reflections of His essence. This is the (third) journey from the Truth to creation. This is the station of sanctity (al-wilāya)*[270]*, of authority*

of deployment (al-taṣarruf) and of union (jam'). The contemplation of the creation does not veil the Truth from him, nor does the contemplation of the Truth veil the contemplation of the creation. Rather, he sees unity manifest in multiplicity and multiplicity rolled up in the Unseen Unity.

The station of the spirit is the culmination of self-negation and Self-affirmation. In it, the mystic recognises that the juxtaposition of unity and multiplicity is not paradoxical. Rather, it coincides such that there is unity in multiplicity.

This is the culmination of the third journey that is the rank of sanctity (al-wilāya) and since he is everlasting after becoming annihilated, he has arrived at the station of complete contentment (al-tamkīn al-tāmm). 'His breast has been expanded'[271] *insofar as he is not so immersed in the rules of the realm of [235] multiplicity to neglect the contemplation of pure unity. Rather, he sits between the two limits and is placed in the station of union between annihilation in the very essence of everlasting subsistence and everlasting subsistence in the very essence of annihilation. This is the fourth journey in creation through the Truth.*

The key term raised in this section is sanctity (*wilāya*) a key Sufi concept that concerns both spiritual authority and intimacy with the One. Kāshānī describes sanctity as the station of annihilation in the One, contentment and intimacy with Him.[272] It is also at this point that Amulī broaches the question current in the school of Ibn 'Arabī concerning the seal of sanctity and the definition of the Pole of reality with specific individuals.[273] The seal is the Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*), the true vicegerent of God on earth.

This is the rank of prophecy (al-nubuwwa) and legislation (al-tashrī') and the leadership of the community with their plurality and differing affairs and their networks of interaction.

Prophecy establishes the criterion both of the Law and distinction between good and evil. As such, Amulī describes the culmination of the fourth journey as the station of the criterion and of the division.[274]

If you know this, then know that as the book consists of four journeys in the sense of an intellectual journey (al-safar al-'ilmī) through theoretical discourse (al-baḥth al-naẓarī) that corresponds to the journey of the wayfarers that is the journey of states (l-safar al-ḥālī) and of actions (al-'amalī) and so on, then one must investigate thoroughly the correspondence between the journeys of the wayfarers and the sections of the book.

The key point here is to stress the correspondence between the two modes of noetic inquiry, mysticism and philosophy and to affirm their complementarity. Indeed, it is often asserted that Mullā Sadrā successfully reconciled the method of the mystics and the philosophers and his *magnum opus* testifies to this achievement.

The first journey concerns metaphysica generalis (al-umūr al-'āmma) and is a premiss upon which the first art relies, that is the proof of the Necessary

in His beauty and His attributes. Through that, one moves onto the second journey which is onto-theology or metaphysica specialis (al-ilāhiyyāt bi l-ma'ná l-akhaṣṣ). This corresponds to the first journey of the wayfarers from the created realms to the Truth. The sage (al-ḥakīm, that is, Mullā Ṣadrā) discusses His attributes the Most High, and from His existence he deduces His unicity and from His unicity His eternality. In fact, from His existence (he deduces) His knowledge, His power, His life and His will. This corresponds to the second journey, which is the journey through the Truth in the Truth.

The first journey therefore concerns onto-theology or rather provides both a semantics and an adequate metaphysics for sound 'God-talk'. Thus appropriately both ontological and cosmological proofs for the existence of God are first expounded here.[275]

The divine sage (Mullā Ṣadrā) makes the third journey in his book (a discussion) of substance and accident. But he discusses them not from the point of view of physics but of divinalia. This section of the book corresponds to the journey of the wayfarer from the Truth to creation since substances and accidents are contingent quiddities and determinations of the created realms.

After discussing substances and accidents, the author discusses the soul and its faculties and its inspirations and its progress and its descent and its felicities and its wretchedness. This is the fourth journey of the book on psychology ('ilm al-nafs). [236] This corresponds to the journey of prophecy and legislation, which is the fourth journey of the wayfarers. The prophet qua prophet, in his legislation of commands and his call (al-da'wa, kerygma) to God, calls to what gives the soul felicity and salvation and repulses from it (the soul) its wretchedness and its perdition. Thus the journey of the soul in the book resembles prophecy and legislation.

The mystics who have completed the four journeys are like prophets because they have seen the Truth and know the end of man, the return to the One. Thus they are best equipped to engage in moral exhortation and commanding the good.[276] Islamic philosophers have held that the perfection of philosophy is prophecy.[277] The enlightened philosopher is in that sense like a prophet because he knows reality but lives in this world. He thus has responsibilities with respect to his fellow man and should concern himself with the organisation of society and social relationships. The need for prophecy in this sense always remains and is a function carried out often by a saint. The legislative function as such of prophecy, however, remains sealed and completed with the Prophet of Islam. The culmination of the journeys of the mystic and the philosopher lies in this world, in the ethics and politics of this world and in striving to achieve spiritual success in thus world by recognising the underlying unity in the cosmos that reflects and pays homage to the unity of God.

Chapter Four

The Epistemology of the Mystics (Part One)

Sayyed Yahya Yasrebi,
Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran

Abstract

Issues concerning the epistemology of the mystics have, though not by this name, been discussed in mystical texts. In the present article these problems shall be extracted, classified and presented within the context of Islamic mysticism. To attain this aim the author first quotes certain passages from mystical texts and then continues his discussion by quoting A'yn al-Quzat-e Hamadani, the twelfth century mystic. At the beginning of the article the manner in which the subject is treated is briefly discussed and the limitations, possibilities and difficulties of the task are briefly set forth.

Introduction

Since epistemology, as an extensive, independent and serious field of intellectual endeavour, is a product of the efforts of modern Western thinkers and these issues have been, irrespective of our wishes, transmitted to us and drawn our attention to their fruits and consequences, we cannot remain indifferent to them. Furthermore, since we must begin our investigation into any field of knowledge by assessing what we have inherited from the past, we must first see what our predecessors have accomplished in the field of epistemology. Although Muslim thinkers of the past did not give a particular title to epistemological problems, they contemplated many issues in this category and set forth their views concerning them. For example, investigations by Ibn Sina and others into such topics as definition and proof contain significant epistemological points and the same may also be

said of theological discussions about speculation and the statements made by mystics concerning intuitive perception.

What shall be presented to the reader in this and the following articles under the title of the epistemology of the mystics is an investigation and analysis of direct and intuitive inner perception of reality, a perception and knowledge that Islamic mysticism sets forth as its final goal and destination. In these articles we shall discuss the principles, foundations, origin and characteristics of mystical knowledge, to the degree possible and based on statements made by Muslim mystics. Moreover, in order to remain within the limits necessitated by the article and because of the need to avoid repetition, we shall refrain from discussing peripheral issues.

Method of Discussion

Since it lies outside the realm of human consciousness and self-awareness, direct inner knowledge is difficult to discuss and investigate. When we speak of a method of discussion we do not mean that there is a particular method that makes investigation of this topic possible and that we aim to present it here. What is meant is that we must first indicate, to the degree possible, the manner in which we plan to pursue this investigation, begin our discussions and reach conclusions. To clarify this issue, we must first consider the following points:

The first point is that all arts and sciences have gone through different stages of development before reaching their present state, and it is certain that they shall not stop at this particular stage, but shall continue to develop and enter still farther stages. Even if we do not accept that such evolutionary development exists in the case of fundamental truths and principles, it is undoubtedly true when it comes to the manner in which we understand, appreciate and make use of these principles and realities. Thus, not only arts and sciences, but also philosophical and mystical forms of knowledge are subject to change and transformation.

It is undoubtedly true that *irfan* and *tasawuf*, too, since their appearance in the Muslim world, have undergone numerous changes until they have appeared in their present forms. Without question, the mysticism of Ibrahim Adham (d.762), Rabe'eh (d. 736) and others like them is different from that of Sarraj Tusi (d. 979), Kalabadi (d. 981) and other such individuals, and the mysticism of this group is again different in many aspects from that of such mystics as Ibn Arabi (d. 1240) and Mawlawi (d. 1273). Another point to keep in mind in this regard is that the change and transformation that gives rise to different degrees and levels is in some ways historical and in others not. It is historical in that this evolution has, in any case, taken place in the course of history. In another

sense, however, as is the case with other fields of knowledge, different levels of mystical insight and accomplishment can be found in different individuals in any given historical period. For example, in the seventh or tenth centuries there were individuals who were also on the same level as Ibn Adham, just as there were mystics who can be compared to Ibn Arabi and Mawlawi. Furthermore, every seeker experiences different stages of mystical illumination in the course of his life.

Taking into consideration the points made above, our discussion shall take the following form:

A. In order to delineate the foundations of the epistemological system of the mystics (intuitive inner perception), we shall make use of statements made by all mystics, irrespective of whether this system is fully expressed by a particular mystic or not. This is so because, for a variety of reasons, it is unreasonable to expect such statements to be comprehensive. These reasons are well known to those who are familiar with the manner in which mystics express themselves. Some of these reasons, in brief, are as follows:

   1. The fact that not all mystics attain every spiritual station
   2. The fact that mystical experiences and states cannot be described in words
   3. The fundamentally secretive nature of direct intuitive perception
   4. The commitment of mystics to refrain from divulging secrets revealed to them
   5. The indirect nature of the language used by mystics
   6. The relative dominance of the following factors in statements made by mystics:

      - The spiritual state and station of the speaker
      - The spiritual state and station of the listener
      - The rhetorical and linguistic abilities of the speaker and his ability to choose appropriate terms and expressions

B. Delineation and classification of these principles and bases is based on the possibility of such delineation and not its precedence. It follows, then, that in many instances we have been obliged to innovate and speculate. Thus, accepting due responsibility for all shortcomings and faults, we expect and shall be most appreciative of the sympathy and kind guidance of scholars in the field.

C. We shall discuss the following topics:

1. Direct intuitive perception. Here we shall define direct inner perception, delineate its limits and describe its foundations.
2. Characteristics of direct intuitive perception, including certitude, clarity, being inexpressible, etc.
3. The relationship between direct intuitive knowledge and the speculative sciences, including the relationship of intuitive knowledge to experimental science, points of agreement and disagreement, the possibility of mutual criticism, the basis for mutual criticism.
4. Points of departure for attaining direct intuitive perception, including the ascending and descending curves, the cause of the effects of Being, Comprehensive Being, etc.
5. Methods of attaining mystical knowledge, including seeking, points of departure, asceticism, stages of the quest and signs of spiritual progress.

A. Presentation of the written and spoken words of the mystics

In this regard it is first of all necessary to consider a selection of statements made by mystics. This has two benefits: the first is that we enter the subject to be discussed through the description provided by the mystics, and the second is that we may refer to these statements in our later discussions.

A'yn Al-quzat and Epistemological Problems

Abu al-Ma'ali Abdullah bin Abu Bakr, known as A'yn al-Quzat, was born in Hamadan. Because of his prodigious intellect and unceasing effort he succeeded, while still young, in mastering the normal sciences of his age, such as mathematics, the natural sciences, divinities, Islamic law (*fiqh*) and traditions (*hadith*). However, he abandoned all these sciences for the sake of *tasawuf* (Sufism) or Islamic mysticism. His two most important works on this subject are *Zubdat al-Haqayeq* and *Tamhidat*. In spite of its brevity, *Zubdat al-Haqayeq* contains valuable material dealing with mystical epistemology. For this reason we shall first quote a selection from this book.

The reason for our choosing A'yn al-Quzat as the first mystic to consider is that he was the first person to deal with epistemological issues in a clear and detailed manner. The issues he investigates early in the 12th century were delved into about one and half centuries later by such commentators on, and masters of, Islamic mysticism, as Sadr al-Din Qunavi. A'yn al-Quzat lived for thirty-three years. Like all others who tried to go beyond the accepted dogma of the age, he was subjected to baseless charges, one of

which was that he claimed to be God. He was tried and convicted, skinned alive, hanged and then burned.

In the Introduction to *Zubdat al-Haqayeq* A'yn al-Quzat states that before writing this book his writings were devoted to explicating Islamic doctrines by relying on the rules of logic. This, he says, he did on the behest of his friends. He maintains, however, that this volume was written after he had attained direct intuitive insight into spiritual realities. He goes on to say that in this book he intends to explain the doctrines of Islam, especially the issue of prophecy, in the light of mystical knowledge. Confessing that such intuitive spiritual insights cannot be expressed in words, he promises to do his utmost to set them forth in a clear and understandable manner. If he fails to do so, he begs the reader to excuse him for two reasons. His first excuse is that he did not have sufficient time and opportunity to search for the most precise and appropriate words. Of course, no matter how precise and well-chosen such terms may be they still could not express the spiritual truths the author wishes to convey. His second excuse is that this text is intended for those who, having already laboured long and hard to understand philosophical and rational concepts, now possess the ability to comprehend the spiritual realities these terms allude to. Ultimately, two motives lie behind the writing of this book: first, the urging of friends, and second, the desire to show the path to intuitive and direct inner realisation to the seekers of truth, so that they may not content themselves with rational and intellectual knowledge alone, mistaking conceptual understanding for Reality.[278]

Now let us take a look at a brief selection from the writings and sayings of Ayn al-Quzat:

1. Inner Illumination

> As long as your are trying to comprehend eternal and divine Knowledge through the exercise of your reason all your efforts will be fruitless, since its true understanding depends on the appearance of an inner illumination . . . This light arises in the individual when he has entered a realm beyond reason and thought (the domain of metareason). Do not imagine this to be impossible, since beyond the boundaries of the reason there lie innumerable worlds, the true number of which is known only by God. Things perceived in these realms are in lesser need of rational explanation and proof, since he who sees something with his own eyes does not require logical proof of its existence. It is the blind who is in need of such proof. For example, one may know the existence of something by touching it. However, the only thing that reason can ascertain in

this regard is the existence of the object that we have touched. It cannot, for instance, tell us what color it is, since the reason can make no headway in such cases.[279]

2. The Limits of the Capability of Thought and Inner Illumination

The original purpose of reason (*khirad*) is to comprehend axioms or first principles that do not require a process of rational or logical analysis to be understood. It is unable, however, to grasp complicated theoretical problems that require complex logical arguments. It is like the case of the sense of touch. The function of this sense is to perceive all those things that can be touched. If a blind person tries to use it to perceive an object of sight, he will fail because the task required would be beyond its capacity . . . We can understand from this that in order to understand complex theoretical and speculative issues we must rely on a faculty of metareason that has no need of logical reasoning and thought and whose relation to these issues is like that of intelligence to axioms or first principles.[280]

3. Insight (basirat) is a Faculty like the Power of Sight or Poetic Taste and Aptitude

The relation between this faculty and what it perceives is like that of the poetic sense when it perceives proportion and rhythm in a poem. Just as the poetic sense perceives harmony without requiring any preliminary logical analysis, metareason also has no need of such devices to evaluate the truth or fallacy of complex theoretical issues, in contrast to the ways of reason and thought and the manner in which the blind try to understand objects of sight . . . . [281]

4. The Difference between the Mystic and the Scholar in Perceiving Supreme Reality

One of the characteristics of metareason is that its perception of the supreme Truth is accompanied by an intense ecstasy inexpressible in words. Human reason also enjoys its comprehension of God's existence. However, this pleasure is not derived from perception of God's beauty, but rather from intellectual knowledge of the existence of such beauty, just as reason enjoys its grasp of such other fields of knowledge as arithmetic, mathematics and medicine. The function of reason here may be compared to that of

the eye in relation to sweet-smelling things. Although the eye may perceive the fine colours of those objects, there is no comparison between its enjoyment and that of the sense of smell. It is only natural that what the eye perceives from sweet-smelling objects does not produce the sort of delight and pleasure that is brought about by the sensations produced by the sense of smell. In the case of the rational apprehension of God also, it may be said that it lacks the intense pleasure and pain that fills the heart of the mystic, and that reason merely takes delight in its knowledge.[282]

5. Attachment of the Mystic to Divine Beauty

When the seeker's spiritual eye is opened, divine truths shall be revealed to him in accordance with his level of spiritual aptitude and development. As more such truths are revealed to him, his familiarity with, and love for, the heavenly realm and God's beauty and blessings increase. This process is accompanied by a parallel decrease in the seeker's familiarity with, and love for, the material world. Of course, this familiarity and attachment is incomparable to any other, and we use such commonly used terms as familiarity, love, beauty and so on. Be on your guard so as not to be deluded by the superficial similarity of the words, for if you are not careful, they shall mislead you so that instead of apprehending the truth of the matter you are forced to content yourself with nothing more than illusory concoctions of impotent reason.[283]

6. Faith in the Realm of Knowledge, Guardianship and Prophecy

He who has not set foot within the realm of metareason will not be persuaded to believe in it by reasoning and rational arguments. It is also impossible for such a person to believe in prophecy, since this is also related to metareason and is even above it. Thus, he who does not admit the existence of the realm of metareason cannot believe in prophecy either. The same is also true of the person who does not believe in the realm of guidance and guardianship (*wilayat*). This world is above the world of reason but below the realm of prophecy. Even if such a person states or thinks that he believes in prophecy he is mistaken, for in truth he is like a blind man who feels an object of a particular colour and believes that by touching it he has experienced colour and perceived its true nature. The fact of the matter is, of course, that there is no relationship whatsoever between his experience and perception of colour.[284]

7. Faith in Prophecy is Identical to Faith in the Invisible Realm

In the eyes of reason, faith in prophecy means faith in the existence of the invisible world. Thus, if reason takes this invisible realm to be similar to the material world it is committing a serious error.[285]

8. The Method of Reinforcing Faith in Prophecy

The way, for those who seek the wisdom of metareason, like those who lack a taste for poetry, is to associate with those who have intuitive spiritual sensibility, so that they may make headway in their search. For it is indeed the case that many people who have no poetic taste and cannot tell the difference between prose and poetry believe that there are others who do. This firm belief in something they have no direct experience of is the result of associating with men of taste who have not been denied this capacity.[286]

9. Attributes of God From the Perspectives of Reason and Intuitive Insight

Divine attributes are generally of two kinds. The first category includes such attributes that can be found in other creatures as well, such as wisdom and creativeness. Reason and thought can comprehend this class of attributes. The other category includes those divine attributes the likes of which cannot be found in other creatures. These attributes include majesty, greatness, beauty and elegance. The true nature of these attributes cannot be grasped by reason, since no matter how much it learns about them it would still be far away from their reality. Thus, in order to perceive such attributes we must rely on knowledge that can only be provided by metareason.

Be careful not to be fooled by appearances, for it is the nature of man to pretend to know everything when he, in fact, knows nothing. Not admitting his ignorance, he interferes in everything irrespective of whether he is qualified to do so or not. An example of this is the way in which the faculty of imagination interferes in matters that rightfully fall within the jurisdiction of reason.

To prove the illegitimate interference of reason it would suffice for you to ask the following question from anyone who claims to understand divine beauty: "Men abandon lesser beauty for the sake of greater beauty, so why do you not abandon things of lesser beauty for the sake of that eternal beauty, while the most beautiful of worldly objects is the ugliest of things in comparison with it?"[287]

10. Love Can only be Understood Through Intuitive Insight

One of the characteristics of the realm of metareason is love. Those who have experienced love know that reason is unable to comprehend it, since the lover's experience cannot be transmitted to those who have not themselves experienced love. The same is also true of such other emotions as anger, happiness, fear and shame. Reason is able to grasp information but is unable to understand emotions and experiences. It is indeed true that reason perceives the existence of such feelings and experiences, but can never experience and perceive them in the same manner that those who have actually felt them do.[288]

11. Realisation of the Incapacity of the Reason through Logic and Intuitive Insight

The more one partakes of the wisdom of metareason the more one becomes cognisant of one's inability to comprehend God's essence and attributes. The last stage of intellectual development is the one in which reason becomes aware of this incapacity, and this realisation is the preliminary indication that one is approaching the realm of metareason. However, there is a huge difference between understanding this impotence by going through a process of logical reasoning and comprehending it through direct intuitive perception. The case here is exactly the same as the imagination's awareness of its incapacity to understand intellectual truths and reason's comprehension of this inability on the part of the faculty of imagination . . . . [289]

12. The Power of Reason

. . . Be careful not to hurriedly deny what your feeble reason cannot understand, since reason has been created to perceive only some creatures. Just as the eye is able to perceive only certain objects and cannot perceive sounds, smells or tastes, reason too is incapable of grasping many things . . . [290]

13. The Intuition's Perception of Truth is Comparable to the Reason's Comprehension of Axioms

Every creature is being re-created at every moment. In other words, God recreates him uninterruptedly and he faces a new

existence, like his old existence at every instant. Those who possess mystical insight observe this directly, but those who rely on their power of reason alone are unable to perceive it . . . The things we have just pointed out are grasped by the intuition and this apprehension is no less clear and precise than reason's comprehension of axioms. The only difference is that intuitive perception cannot be expressed in words. Undoubtedly, then, words are unable to transmit these truths to the minds of others and make others understand them. Thus, whoever discovers the Truth becomes dumb.[291]

14. The Difference between Intellectual Knowledge (ilm) and Mystic Knowledge (ma'rifat)

You may perhaps wish to know the difference between intellectual and mystical knowledge. Whatever can be directly referred to by a particular term so that if the student hears it either once or a number of times his understanding of that concept will be identical with that of the teacher is intellectual knowledge (*ilm*). An idea, however, that can only be alluded to by symbolic words and expressions falls within the category of mystic knowledge (*ma'rifat*). This is how I have used these two terms in this book, and this is the way that spiritual masters usually use them. This is not to deny, however, that the terms *ilm* and *ma'rifat* are used interchangeably in conventional usage.[292]

15. Intuitive Realisations are Inexpressible

. . . Knowledge bestowed on the prophets is inspired. Since these truths are expressed in symbolic and allegorical language, no one but those who possess inner intuitive perception and have been initiated into the divine mysteries can understand them through these expressions . . . Exactly like statements made by lovers concerning union, separation, and so on; utterances that are incomprehensible to those who have not personally experienced love. This is the meaning of Junaid's statement; "our words are allusions." It is impossible for the mystic to speak except in figurative and allusive language. Whoever tries to decipher the meaning of their words by relying on rational reasoning shall go astray.[293]

16. The Two Forms of Intellectual Learning

From one perspective intellectual problems are of two kinds. Those that fall within the first group have two dimensions while those that fall within the second group have three. Some imagine that the issues in the second category belong to mystic and spiritual knowledge and not to the field of intellectual learning. This is a misunderstanding that I shall try to clarify here.

The subjects in the first category have two aspects, one of which is the teaching and guidance of the instructor and the other is the understanding and receptivity of the student. The subjects that fit in the second group have three aspects. The first is the guidance and instruction of the teacher. The second is the understanding of the pupil, while the third is the student's mystic taste and intuitive perception. Most of the issues concerning the soul, divine attributes and the Hereafter fall into this category. Most scholars imagine that they comprehend these subjects, while the truth of the matter is that they understand no more than a shadow of the real thing.[294]

17. The Best Way to Attain Spiritual Knowledge

When the seeker after Truth has, by means of oral instruction, become partly familiar with these matters, he should try, as much as possible, to associate with spiritual masters. He should reveal his inner self to them, and, through self-purification, prepare himself to realise these truths. This is so, since no perfectly enlightened being can lead one to the Goal unless one has properly prepared oneself.[295]

18. Revelation

When the author began to write this chapter a lightening bolt from the eternal glory of the Kingdom of Heaven struck him, wiping out his knowledge and understanding and even his very self. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the divine Self took possession of him and the illusory disappeared in the Real! When that supreme and eternal Glory returned his reason, knowledge and identity, he composed the following poem:

Concerning what has happened to me,
I can say only one thing: nothing!
If you know what is good for you,
You'll inquire no further!

His heart beat wildly and tears flowed from his eyes. Love ran wild and unbearable sorrow and regret filled him. He asked himself: "how long are you going to continue with these futile efforts? How long are you going to remain in the prison of separation and dream of the Beloved?"

As the fires of love reached their highest pitch the author's soul returned to its original home and the pen dropped from his hand.

The supreme and eternal Beloved granted him an audience and the bird of the soul took flight, left the cage of the material body and set out for its true, original and eternal nest. What transpired between him and the eternal Lord of the universe, in whose clutches he was held, is impossible to describe.

When he was granted permission to return he begged to be allowed to tell those imprisoned within the confines of time and space something about what he had experienced. Having been granted permission to do so, he penned these lines after he had returned to the prison of the body. If you may wonder as to the meaning of all this, a voice from behind the veil of the invisible world replies: "know your place! It is futile to describe colours and pictures to the blind!"

I swear to that almighty Lord of the heavens and the Earth, of glory and majesty, that even if a minute particle of what transpired between I and the Beloved is revealed in the world of dust, even the Throne shall be split asunder not to mention the heavens and the Earth.[296]

19. Attainment of Spiritual Truth and Desire for Worldly Things are Incompatible

Never, never imagine that you may understand these spiritual realities by relying on feeble rational and intellectual comprehension of these words. Accept this free advice from me. I see, though, that you will not do so. I excuse you, however, since I have seen astonishing examples of intellectual infatuation. Thus, I can pardon you and others like you for this error.

If you have the will and the desire to realise the Truth by relying on personal experience and intuitive insight, you must abandon this base world and leave its unworthy and transient pleasures and past-times to those who crave such things and are devoid of spiritual ambition. No price is too high for the Hereafter. What could be more shameful and ignominious for the lover than to content himself with any thing less than meeting his beloved . . . ? If you let go of the

world God shall give you a soul that shall desire nothing but eternal and divine beauty, the true water of life.[297]

20. Words Belonging to this World Cannot Indicate the Truths of the Invisible Realm

Since we have borrowed these terms to refer to spiritual concepts there is a vast gulf between these ideas and the superficial and conventional meanings of these words. This is only natural because the words in question were not originally created to indicate spiritual realities. We should not be surprised, then, that confronted with these words, men should understand their superficial and conventional meanings. Only those who have some experience of spiritual knowledge and realities can expect to detect the spiritual and mystic truths they point to.

My reasons for thinking so are clear. If someone wishes to make a blind man understand the nature of colours, he has no choice but to explain to him that human beings possess another faculty with which they sense external objects, just as they do with their other senses. He must farther explain, however, that the way this sense perceives things is different from his four other senses, and even from the mode of perception of his rational faculty. It is difficult for the blind person to comprehend all of this. Even if he professes to believe what is explained to him about sight and claims to understand it, we know that he speaks of things that lie beyond the scope of his senses, and his conception of these matters is no more than fantasy. Our relationship with realities that lie beyond our material world is exactly the same.[298]

21. Preconditions for the Opening of the Spiritual Eye

If you are a true seeker you should take care, and, as I have already explained, keep in mind the conditions for faith in the unseen world. You should be so insistent in this belief and concentrate upon it with such vehemence that faith in the invisible realm becomes a part of your nature and not require any supporting logical argument or proof. As a result, your soul will be prepared to receive the spiritual light. When this light appears in your soul you shall have spiritual insight and perception. This insight is one of the traits of the realm of metareason. The important thing is for you to increase your efforts . . . .[299]

22. Perceptions of Metareason

Truths obtained by the faculty of metareason, can, from one perspective, be divided into two types. The first type includes facts that have the same relation to metareason that axioms and first principles have to reason and intellect. The second group includes truths that relate to metareason in the same way that complex theoretical concepts relate to the power of reason. In other words, they can only be understood by reliance on axioms and first principles. This point is fine and difficult to understand. Do not expect to comprehend it easily, but must accept it on faith as you do with the realm of the unseen as a whole, until God grants you direct experience of it and that experience and intuitive perception makes your reliance on outside authority and secondary sources unnecessary.[300]

23. Perceptions of Metareason are Mysteries to Reason and Intellect

Things perceived by metareason remain mysteries to man's faculty of reason, just as perceptions made by the eye are mysteries to the sense of smell, objects perceived by the power of fantasy (*wahm*) are mysteries to the faculty of imagination (*phantasia*), the perceptions of the sense of touch are mysteries to the sense of taste, and finally axioms and first principles are mysteries to all human senses. The real reason for this is that "hidden" and "apparent" are relative qualities. A thing may be hidden from one of the senses but apparent to another sense. Axioms are apparent to reason but are hidden from the senses and are mysteries to them. Every inexpressible truth is a mystery to language and words . . . On the whole, we may say that what is a mystery will always remain a mystery and what is apparent will always be apparent, and these shall not change unless there is a change in the seeker's state of consciousness.[301]

24. Will All the Wise Enter the Realm of Metareason?

If you ask whether every rational human being must ultimately enter the realm of metareason, just as every child must finally reach maturity, the answer is that metareason has many stages and every human being will reach at least one of these stages, even if it is after death. However, it is impossible for everyone to reach all the levels that some human beings attain. One human being must

attain many levels of metareason even before he abandons the veil of the body. For most men, however, it is impossible to reach most of these levels or stages, either in this world or after death. This is a verity known to sages by inner spiritual insight, just as rational men know that ten is a greater number than one. He who has not experienced metareason usually stubbornly denies its existence until death removes the veil that covers his eyes.[302]

25. The Relationship between Reason and Metareason

No doubt by observing the bodies of such creatures as horses, monkeys, camels, donkeys and human beings, man discerns the existence of souls or selves that animate them, and can distinguish between these souls. He can also easily distinguish bodies that have a soul that controls and manages them from bodies that have lost their souls through death. In the same way, the relationship between reason and metareason is like the relationship between the body and the soul. Therefore, by observing the outer forms of men's reasoning faculties, fully enlightened sages discern the degree to which different individuals have attained the realm of metareason and the degree to which the spirit of metareason is present in the body of reason. In this manner, the masters distinguish between rich and full rational faculties on the one hand and destitute and empty ones that seem like dead bodies and empty and soulless shells on the other.[303]

26. Within the Limits of its Ability, Reason is a Reliable Scale

. . . It should be noted that the expectations from reason harboured by those scholars who are infatuated with it are like the man who witnesses the precision of the scale used by a goldsmith and then desires to weigh a mountain with it. This, of course, is impossible, but it does not mean that that the scale in question does not do its job correctly when it is properly used. Remember, then, that reason is a trustworthy scale and its decrees are certain and reliable. It is honest and without error. However, despite all this, if someone tries to judge everything in its light, even such maters as the Hereafter, prophecy and divine Attributes, he is attempting the impossible and shall be sadly disappointed.

With the dawn of the light of metareason this inappropriate expectation gradually disappears, just as the stars begin to fade with the coming of dawn. There is a difference between voluntary

abandonment of this expectation and its natural fading away. Be careful not to err! You cannot abandon this improper expectation on your own accord, for this abandonment or dropping away hinges on the dawning of the light I have already mentioned. Then you will let go of your improper expectation whether you want to or not.[304]

Conclusion and Summation

Considering their historical precedence, Ayn al-Quzat's statements are very profound and fruitful. We can classify what has been set forth above in the following manner:

1. It is Possible for Man to Reach Metareason—Ayn al-Quzat believes that it is possible for all men to enter the realm of metareason (point 24). He believes that all human beings are involved in an evolutionary process which qualifies them to eventually realise some level of metareason, though not all human beings may attain all the stages and levels of that realm.
2. Metareason Cannot be Comprehended and Realised Through Reason and Thought. He discusses this subject in sections 3, 6, 7, 15, 16, 20 and 23. He emphasizes the point that truths realised by the intuition remain an undecipherable mystery to reason and intellect and can never be understood through instruction, verbal description and explanation. The only path open to reason in this regard is to take the existence of metareason on faith.
3. The Limits of the Capabilities of Reason and Thought. Ayn al-Quzat considers reason to be a reliable measure if applied to fields lying within the limits of its capability. Within such limits, he maintains, its decrees concerning right and wrong are fully credible (section 26).
4. The Boundaries of Spiritual Insight. Inner spiritual insight has its own domain, to which reason and thought have no inroads. This domain includes the following fields:

    a. Perceiving the existence of Truth (section 4)
    b. Perceiving the attributes of God (section 9)
    c. Perceiving the states of love (section 10)
    d. Perceiving the impotence of reason (section 11)
    e. Perceiving other aspects of existence lying beyond the scope of rational and intellectual perception and comprehension

5. Some Points about Insight. Sometimes Ayn al-Quzat compares spiritual insight to the sense of sight or to poetic taste (section

3), while on other occasions he compares perceptions made by insight to those made by the rational mind concerning axioms and first principles, and wishes, in such a manner, to give us some indication of the nature of this faculty (section13). On still other occasions, he compares the relation of spiritual insight to reason to the relationship between spirit and body (section 25).

6. Characteristics of Metareason. In order to give us a conception of metareason, he enumerates certain traits for it, including the following:

    a. Lack of need for reason and logic
    b. Union with intuitive and spiritual realities. This means that, in contrast with the findings of reason, that can be violated or ignored by the individual, the mystic is united with what he perceives and cannot separate himself from it (section 5).
    c. Intuitively perceived truths cannot be transmitted or taught to others (sections 14, 15, 16 and 20).

7. Preconditions for Attaining Spiritual Insight. In order to acquire spiritual insight one must purify one's soul (section 17), turn away from the world (section 19) and practice self-discipline and self-denial (section 21).
8. Different Types of Truths Realised by Metareason. Ayn al-Quzat divides truths apprehended by metareason into those realized directly and those that are realized indirectly (section22).
9. Other Subjects. Other points are also made in these selections. These include the way to strengthen faith in metareason (section 8), the recounting of a revelation (section 18) and the relation of reason to metareason (section 25).

The Epistemology of the Mystics (Part Two)

Sayyed Yahya Yasrebī,
Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran

Abstract

The viewpoints of the mystics concerning epistemological questions have been discussed in mystical texts although not under the title of this essay. In the last issue we discussed, with regard to this topic, the perspectives of 'Ayn al-Quzāt-e Hamadānī and in this one, we shall examine those of another mystic, Sadr al-Dīn-e Qūnyavī. Under two main headings the author first briefly describes Qūnyavī's scholarly accomplishments and then, under a third heading, proceeds to extract, classify and present his views through an examination of his *I'jaz al-Bayān.*

Sadr al-Dīn Muhammad Ashāq-e Qūnyavī (d. 673 H/ 1294 A.D), the seventh century mystic, was the direct disciple and spiritual son of Muhī al-Dīn ibn al-'Arabī and was chosen as his vicegerent. Furthermore, he is the most distinguished representative of, and commentator on, Ibn al-'Arabī's mystical doctrine and thought.[305] Chronologically speaking, he precedes other famous commentators on the works of Ibn al-'Arabī such as Talamsānī [306] (d. 736 H/ 1357 A.D), Jandī[307] (d. 700 H/ 1321A.D), Farghanī[308] (d. 700 H/ 1321 A.D), Kāshānī[309] (d. 736 H/ 1357 A.D), Qaysarī[310] (b.751 H/ 1372 A.D) and Sayyid Haydar Āmulī[311] (d. 787 H/ 1408 A.D)[312]. This being the case, he must be given precedence over them when it comes to explaining and interpreting fine and difficult points in Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings.

He is the author of a number of valuable works, among which one can point to *al-Nasūs fi Tahqiq al-Towar al-Makhsūs*, and *al-Fukuk fi Mustanadat Hikam al-Fusūs*. These two books deal with textual difficulties in the works of Ibn al-'Arabī. He himself describes them as 'the key to the keys to *Fusūs*' and 'the last word on *Fusūs* and the revealer of its secrets.'

Among his other works one can point to *Miftah al-Ghayb* and *I'jaz al-Bayān*, both of which are based on the teachings of the mystics. Qūnyavī also wrote two books in Persian. They are *Tabsarat al-Mubtadi* and *al-Mufawizat*. Both of these deal with issues in Ibn al-'Arabī's mystical doctrines. Qūnyavī discusses epistemology in his *Miftah* more than in any of his other books, with the exception of *I'jaz al-Bayān*, the introduction to which contains valuable information about this subject. The information we encounter here is both greater in volume and more cohesive. This is why we have chosen this latter work to which to refer from the writings of the mystics.

What follows is a translation of the most significant epistemological sections of this work, discussions which in fact serve as an introduction to the principles on which Qūnyavī bases his interpretation:

1. The Difficulty of Discovering the Truth Through the Intellect

A. Relativity in Judgments

"If we try to attain knowledge through reliance on intellectual and rational arguments we will definitely encounter difficulties since none of these proofs and arguments will be immune to challenge and rebuttal. This is so for the following reasons:

- o The theoretical views and judgments of different thinkers differ in accordance with their varying powers of perception.
- 1. What thinkers perceive and their perceptive faculties are influenced by their methods and on what it is that they concentrate their attention.
- 2. Methods and approaches are in turn determined by aims and objectives.
- 3. Aims and objectives are themselves affected by beliefs, temperaments, relationships and other such factors.
- 4. Finally, all of the above are affected by the different manifestations of divine attributes in the realm of possibility, and these manifestations themselves differ in accordance with different aptitudes and degrees . . . .

Because of the factors mentioned above, thinkers and philosophers fell into disagreement concerning what is necessitated by reason and the process of their own rational investigations, so that none accepted the conclusions reached by the others. What was considered a good and credible reason by one had no validity in the eyes of the other, and so they failed to reach

a consensus. Thus, every thinker takes that assumption to be valid and credible which he thinks valid, has preferred and in which he has chosen to put his trust." [313]

B. Rational Proof Does Not Prove The Veracity of a Proposition

"If the proof set forth in support of a proposition seems inadequate, this does not mean that we can say with certainty that the proposition in question is in fact false. This is so since there are many propositions in support of which we cannot present rational proof, while we and many rational thinkers have no doubt whatsoever that they are correct. On the other hand there have been cases where propositions have been proved through seemingly unchallengeable rational arguments and have been accepted as true by a group of thinkers so that neither they nor others were able to discover any reason to entertain the least doubt in them. Then, after a passage of time, either they or others have discovered the fallacious nature of the foundations of these propositions and thus these arguments have been discredited. It goes without saying that the correctness of these objections and repudiations, just as that of the proofs, is not certain, and this is the source of the differences of opinion that have arisen among followers of different religions. It follows, then, that we cannot, with complete certitude, prefer one point of view or position to another. The difficulty that philosophers face here is, on the one hand, similar to that of those devoted to intuitive inner perception, who are attached to, and trust and believe in knowledge that they attain in this manner, and on the other hand, similar to those who have deluded themselves into accepting certain propositions and have therefore come to believe in false conclusions."[314]

C. Differences Among Thinkers Concerning the Laws of Reason

"There are many differences among philosophers concerning the laws of reason. These differences include the following:

- Some forms and proofs are considered unproductive syllogisms by some and productive by others.
- Some thinkers decree that certain things are necessitated by a proposition while others believe that they are not.
- There is disagreement concerning the question as to whether man needs both logic and rational laws.

Thus, conclusions reached by a process of logical reasoning are constantly vulnerable to scepticism and doubt, and he who accepts a certain

perspective does not do so because he has subjected that entire position along with all its propositions, bases and arguments to a thorough rational examination. In fact, he himself would agree that the spirit of all arguments cannot usually be grasped through rational proof and that the correctness and incorrectness of propositions is not determined by decisive proof, since all such arguments and proofs are attacked by opponents who cast doubt upon their trustworthiness. Sometimes he himself is well aware of the validity of these objections but in spite of this fact continues to believe in that particular position without the least doubt or scepticism. This applies to many men and is in fact a return to the position of men of intuitive inner perception, who believe that true knowledge can only be bestowed by God and cannot be acquired . . ."

D. Conclusion

"We can conclude by saying that for two reasons we cannot consider rational argument sufficient in the attainment of knowledge. First, the ultimate foundation of an individual's belief in a certain proposition is an inner intuitive feeling that is not acquired through rational argumentation. He and all those who share his beliefs have this inner trust in the truthfulness of these propositions. Now, the question arises as to whether the propositions in which we have chosen to believe are indeed true, and this cannot be ascertained except through genuine spiritual realization and knowledge attained from realms lying beyond the range of human senses and understanding. Second, even if we assume the veracity of all those propositions that can be proven by logical argument, the fact still remains that they are negligible compared to all those that are probable or cannot be either confirmed or denied because logical arguments concerning them cannot be set forth. Therefore, first of all it is difficult to achieve absolute certainty through logic and rational thought and, second, even if such certitude can be attained it is so in a handful of cases."[315]

2. Preference of Intuitive Perception over Reason

A. The Way of Direct Knowledge is Superior

"The wise believe there are only two paths to true knowledge. One is the path of reason and rational thought and the other is that of direct intuitive perception, and since, as has been explained above, the path of reason has been shown to be insufficient, we are left with no other choice but to tread the path of intuitive perception, which is based on inner struggle, self-purification and taking refuge in God. Thus, the wise thing

to do is to set foot upon the path of inner perception and realisation, cut off all worldly attachments, purify our mind and spirit from all superficial knowledge and the rules of logic and rationality, then turn to God and try to attain the Truth."[316]

B. How Shall the Journey be Made?

"Since not everyone has access to spiritual realities when he begins the journey, he should follow those who have immersed themselves in the ocean of oneness and have reached the goal, such as the prophets (peace be upon them), who are the translators of divine will and command and manifestations of His knowledge and blessing, and those who have inherited their knowledge and spiritual position, until the seeker himself becomes the direct recipient of divine grace, his soul is illuminated with spiritual realisation and, like the saints and prophets, perceives the truth as it really is."[317]

3. Another Analysis

Following what has been quoted above, Qūnyavī presents another analysis and delineation of *ma'rifat*, which we shall briefly discuss below:

A. All spiritual realities possess attributes, dimensions and characteristics, some of which are easier to perceive and grasp than others. He who desires to know a particular truth must, on the one hand, be distinct from it and, on the other, have a correspondence with it. Because of his unique human essence, man is distinct from all other creatures, but, because of his comprehensiveness, he has a correspondence with all of them. This correspondence is the root of his effort to know things. If it did not exist the desire and consequent search for things would not be possible either, since it is impossible to seek what is unknown. Thus, it is this correspondence that gives rise to the desire to search, and it is through this correspondence, which is known to him, that man seeks to discover the truth that is the origin of this and other correspondences. Moreover, this passage from a known correspondence and attribute to the true essence of an object is sometimes possible and at other times, for a number of reasons, impossible. In this effort sometimes we reach a close correspondence from a distant one. In any case, the seeker after knowledge is satisfied with his investigation when he has discovered what he believes to be that reality and has reached what he takes to be his goal, even though in truth he may have grasped only one of the dimensions or attributes of that reality. It may also be the case

that others who seek the same truth may, through another attribute or correspondence, come to understand another dimension of it and imagine that they know the whole of that reality, while, in fact, the knowledge attained by each of these seekers is only the fruit of an investigation into only one specific attribute of the innumerable attributes and effects of that truth (refer to the story of the elephant and the group of blind men). This is why seekers after wisdom disagree in their definition and delineation of that truth. Ibn Sīnā, the greatest of all philosophers, realised this fact, whether through intellectual or intuitive realization, and asserts repeatedly that knowledge of the true nature of objects is beyond man's capacity and the most we can hope for is to understand the attributes and effects of an object and not its essence.[318]

B. Knowledge of abstract realities, as they exist in divine knowledge, is impossible. For us, as it has already been stated, knowledge is based on correspondence and there is no correspondence between abstract spiritual realities and the seekers after truth, since we are not in a position to understand such things. As knowing subjects we partake of all the attributes of conditioned temporal existence and limited knowledge, while to be in the position to understand abstract truths we must be free from all these obstacles, for this is a minimum requirement for gaining this kind of knowledge. It follows, then, that as knowing subjects, there is no correspondence between us and abstract spiritual realities, and our intellectual grasp of them must, perforce, be limited to their attributes and effects and will not enter the realm of their abstract truth. It should be added, however, that it is indeed possible to know these realities, though not by reliance on theoretical and intellectual understanding, but rather only when the spiritual seeker has been fully liberated from all worldly limitations, conditioning and attachment.[319]

Divine effusions (manifestations)—the source of all inspired and direct knowledge—are not realised by the mystic and way-farer except on the basis of certain modalities (relationships). Between the servant and the Lord there exist countless modalities and relationships. From the relationship of 'divinity' to the manifestation of the very essence of the servant in the realm of (divine) knowledge and its consequent existence and attribution to the divine will by way of creation, existential unity or commonality and so on. Attainment of any intuitive spiritual knowledge depends on these modalities.

Thus, gaining a clear, direct, intuitive perception of the truth in its entirety requires, besides divine grace, which is the main factor, the

disabling of all outer and inner faculties and a cleansing of the mind of all knowledge and belief. One must empty one's mind and soul from everything except the true goal and then turn wholeheartedly and with one's entire mind and soul toward God. The seeker must then unify his mind and purify his will and purpose and rid his self of all worldly attachments, imitated and borrowed virtues and superficial and illusory limitations in their various forms. By constantly meditating upon and nourishing such an inner, spiritual state, and by guarding against the least wavering and wandering, and through perseverance and steadfastness, he can create correspondence and harmony between his soul and the invisible sacred realm that is the source of all perfection and divine manifestation.[320]

The Epistemology of the Mystics (Part Three)

Sayyed Yahya Yasrebi,
Allamah Tabatabai University, Iran

Abstract

The viewpoints of the mystics concerning epistemological questions have been discussed in mystical texts, although not under this title. In the last two issues we discussed the perspectives of 'Ayn al-Quzāt Hamadānī and Sadr al-Dīn Qūnyavī with regards this topic and in this one we shall examine those of Sheikh Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī. The author first briefly describes Qūnyavī's scholarly accomplishments and then proceeds to extract, classify and present his views.

A great Shī'ite mystic and Sūfī, Bahā' al-Dīn Heidar bin Alī Hussaini (720-787 H/ 1341-1408 A.D) was one of the most distinguished commentators on Ibn al-'Arabī. He was more than just a commentator, however, since in some cases he sets forth original principles and views. Among his well-known works one can mention *Jam' al-Asrār wa Manba' al-Anwār*, *Asrār al-Sharī'a wa Atwār al-Tarīqah wa Anwār al-Haqīqah*, *Naqd al-Nuqūd fi Ma'rifat al-Wujūd*, *al-Muhit al-A'azam*, *Nass al-Nasūs fi Sharh al-Fusūs* and dozens of other important books and treatises.

Let us now examine a selection of his views taken from the introduction to *Nass al-Nasūs* concerning the fundamental principles and issues of the epistemology of the mystics. Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī devotes the third part of the third section of his introduction to *Sharh al-Fusūs* to the question of knowledge. In this part he deals with the knowledge attained by the mystics and the foundations of their epistemology. He attempts to distinguish mystical knowledge from that attained by theologians and philosophers from the viewpoint of its basis, range, aims and nature, and

to clarify the subject as much as he can. Since some of these discussions are related to epistemological problems, we have decided to make an appropriate account of his statements, sum them up and present them as the third part of our selection of the views of mystics concerning epistemology.

1. The Definition of Mystical Knowledge

It is difficult to define this form of knowledge since some consider it intrinsic to human consciousness, self-evident and immediately perceived, while others consider it to be acquired. Although mystical knowledge, in the absolute sense, cannot be defined, it may suffice to say that:

> Among the Sūfīs, mystical knowledge is defined as that form of knowledge which is bestowed by God in through inspiration and revelation. [321]

Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī then quotes a Sūfī master as follows:

> *Ma'rifat* (mystical knowledge) is a subcategory of knowledge, since the term is used to indicate two forms of insight, both of which are from among the types of knowledge. In the first instance it refers to perceiving someone's inner nature by certain outward features, as we have in the Qur'ānic verse, *you shall recognize them by certain signs on their faces.*[322] The second meaning refers to recognising someone you have seen in the past. For example, you see someone you knew many years ago and recognise him. The knowledge referred to in the first case is the "absent" variety while that of the second instance may be called the "present" type, and the difference between the religious scholar and the mystic is based on nothing other than the difference between their respective forms of knowledge. Thus, the scholar and the mystic differ in their approaches. Some have no other means of knowing God except through the exercise of reason and logic. From observing His actions they make conclusions about His attributes, from His attributes to His names, and from His names to His essence: *They are the ones who seem to be beckoned from far away.*[323] Others, on the other hand, soar upon the wings of divine grace, reach the realm of direct perception and meet their Goal, just as they had met Him

> in the world of pre-existence. Unlike the first group, these move from the knowledge of the divine Essence to that of His attributes. Needless to say, a vast gulf separates these two forms of knowledge. In the first instance the seeker is dealing with an imaginary phenomenon since he has no first-hand experience of the Goal, while in the second case he has direct knowledge and his perception is like a fully conscious person's direct encounter with a phenomenon.[324]

Following the above quotation and another one from al-Ghazālī, 'Amulī says:

> What is meant here is that from the viewpoint of the mystics *ma'rifat* or mystical and spiritual insight is different from *'ilm*, or intellectual knowledge, and that spiritual and mystical insight into ***wājib***, necessary being, and *mumkin*, contingent being, is superior to intellectual knowledge, since it is not possible to know necessary being except through ***kashf wa shuhūd***, or direct spiritual experience. In fact, a closer examination of the matter shows that knowledge of contingent being is also impossible without direct inner spiritual perception and insight, since, as it has already been pointed out, the essence of all contingent being is none other than necessary being.[325]

In another place he says:

> To conclude, knowledge (*'ilm*) is more general than mystical insight or gnosis (*m'arifat*) and hence the latter is included in the former. This is because knowledge is nothing but an all-pervasive disclosure and revelation (of reality) which in relation to us is reactive and distinctive but which, in relation to the Absolute, is an active and complete self-disclosure (of the Real or His essence)[326]

After a brief discussion concerning various definitions of *'ilm* or knowledge, he goes on to say:

> The final result of the discussions of philosophers concerning knowledge can be summed up in the following manner: knowledge consists of discovering the comprehensive portrait of the particular subject being investigated in a given field of

scholarship. Moreover, this definition is also accepted by the mystics.[327]

2. The Subject of Mysticism

Following a discussion of philosophy (*hikmat*), theology (***kalām***), and such other fields of learning as mathematics, natural science and logic, Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī goes on to describe the subject of mystical knowledge in the following manner:

> The subject of true science, that is, the science of the **Sūfīs**, includes knowledge of God's essence, names, attributes and actions and other such related matters.[328]

At this point he briefly explains that philosophy, theology and mysticism deal with the same reality and that the fundamental difference between them lies in their methods of investigation.[329] He then makes the following comment concerning these differing methods:

> The philosopher must discover philosophical truths through rational arguments and syllogisms, otherwise he shall remain in the dark and begin to fight and argue with other philosophers and thinkers. The theologian also bases his knowledge upon logical arguments and scriptural evidence and in this way reaches correct beliefs and certain rules, and whoever fails to realise these truths by traversing this path has failed to reach his goal and engages in arguments and disputes with other theologians and thinkers.
>
> The Sūfīs, however, attain their knowledge through direct intuitive perception and thus gain knowledge of the truth. This intuitive perception is brought about by divine grace and manifestation, which is variously referred to as 'revelation,' 'inspiration' and 'intuitive perception', and includes different stages and degrees. Through this intuitive perception the Sūfī attains his goal, and having done so does not argue or fight with anyone since he realises that everyone is searching for the Truth even if he is on the wrong path, and that God is the common goal of all even though they may entertain different opinions, for, as the saying goes, 'there are as many paths to God as there are souls.' In any case, we (the Sūfīs) do not

discuss their misunderstanding of spiritual truths except by relying on principles accepted by them, since they have already admitted their ignorance and inability to comprehend reality.

Now, as far as the philosophers are concerned, the greatest of them, Ibn Sīnā, admits in most of his books that he is ignorant and unable to understand the true nature of anything, be it necessary or contingent, simple or compound, as he explains in one of his books: 'It is not possible for man to realise the true nature of objects since all we can perceive of objects is their characteristics and effects. We do not know the ultimate differentiaof things so that through such knowledge we may discover their real nature. All we know is that they are things that possess certain effects and traits. We do not know the true nature of God, reason, the soul, the heavens, fire, air, water and earth. We do not understand the true nature of such accidents as white and black.' In other words, he says: 'We do not know God's real nature, but we know that He is a necessary being and this is something which is inherent or concomitant to it not its reality. By means of this inherent quality we reach others through oneness, and if we take the reality of necessary being to be something that possesses essential existence, then the term also refers to something beyond our comprehension. The reality of necessary being is neither existence (*wujūd*) nor essence, since essences get their existence from another source while the necessary is by essence the cause of existence.'[330]

Ibn Sīnā has the following general rule concerning this issue: Man cannot know the reality of objects because they are either simple or compound. Simple objects cannot be known because true knowledge is gained through differentia and genus while simple objects lack these qualities. It is also impossible to have true knowledge of compound objects because to do so one must first comprehend their simple components, and since it is impossible to know these simple constituents it is also impossible to have real knowledge of the compound which they make up. It follows, then, that man should abandon trying to gain knowledge of the reality of objects and content himself with knowing their properties and effects.'[331]

Here, he criticises Ibn Sīnā's views concerning the eternity of the world and God's knowledge of details and then says:

> Philosophers are of two kinds: the philosophical and the illuminationist. And what each group has said about the other is sufficient to refute the views of both.[332]

He follows this with a critique of the views of theologians with regards to perceiving objects and the views of Imām Fakhr Rāzī, as the most prominent representative of this group, on the issue of the extraneity of existence over essence and his views and those of the Asha'rites concerning the separateness of the essence and attributes of God, and then says:

> The point here is that when their understanding of God's essence and attributes is like this, how will it be concerning other things, while the fact of the matter is that one cannot understand objects without first having knowledge of God. [333]

He then says that it is not possible to realise the truth by following their methods:

> In criticising the theologians it suffices to note that they belong to two schools: the Asha'rites and the Mu'tazilites, and these two groups have so well exposed the faults and shortcomings of each other's views that no more criticism is needed. Moreover, we also possess the objections and criticisms raised against them by philosophers and Sūfīs. It is said that one night Fakhr **Rāzī** was crying. One of his students asked, 'Why are you crying?' Imām Fakhr **Rāzī** said, 'For thirty years I thought a particular view was correct but I now realise that it was false.' The student said, 'Master, what guarantee is there that what you think to be correct today will not shown to be false in thirty years time, and how can one be sure that the same is not true of all your knowledge?'
>
> Shaykh Muhiuddin Ibn al-'Arabī also wrote a lengthy letter to Fakhr Rāzī, questioned the veracity of his knowledge and encouraged him to try, in the manner of the Sūfīs, to attain real knowledge through direct, inner realisation and not to be contented, like artisans, with the fruit of his

own labour, but to enjoy divine blessings, generosity and bounty.[334]

At this point Shaykh Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī quotes certain verses from Fakhr Rāzī in which Rāzī admits his inability to attain real knowledge. This is followed by a quotation from Ibn al-'Arabī in support of 'Amulī's position and to the effect that the path to certain knowledge is barred to all except those who gain direct, inner realisation. He then quotes Imām Alī (A) on the subject, where he warns his disciples not to be like the blindfolded donkey that turns the mill stone. The donkey walks day and night but when its blindfold is removed finds itself at the starting point again. 'Amulī then refers to the following quotation from Imām Alī (A):

> The sacred law is the river, while the Truth is the sea. Experts in the religious law walk around the banks of this river, while sharp-witted philosophers reach the sea and search for pearls and God-realised mystics board ships of salvation and sail the seas.[335]

Following these discussions he turns to a general definition of the subject, sources and issues dealt with in different fields of learning and quotes Sadr al-Dīn Qūnyavī on the issue:

> The divine science, meaning mysticism, includes all other sciences, just as its subject, God, contains and is the Lord of all things. This science has a subject, principles and issues, problems and questions, from which the subjects, principles and issues of all other sciences are derived. Its subject is the existence of God, its principles are the realities inherent in such existence . . . and its issues are the questions and problems that are clarified in the light of those principles . . . and all these matters can be reduced to two things: knowledge of the way creatures relate to God and the way God relates to them.[336]

3. The Manner in which One Enters Mysticism

Concerning the way one may enter the realm of mystical truth, Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī says:

> These basic principles and beliefs, that is, the principles and fundamental beliefs of Sufism and mysticism, must at first

be accepted by the seeker on the basis of faith from a mystic who has reached the appropriate stations (*maqāmat*). Thus, the spiritual search begins with imitation based on faith and proceeds until the seeker reaches a stage where the veils covering the Truth are removed from his eyes and the true path is revealed to him.

This unveiling of the Truth may occur in two ways. One is intellectual and rational. In this case a mystic may reveal an aspect of the Truth at a moment when the seeker is spiritually ready to receive it. In the second case, through inner illumination caused by divine grace the seeker perceives the truth of the teachings he has already received and there is no need for rational argument, instruction and so on.[337]

4. The Standard and Logic of Mystical Knowledge

Concerning this question, Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī says:

> Every science has measures and standards in the light of which the correct and incorrect may be separated; for example, grammar in language, prosody in poetry and logic in the speculative sciences . . . and since every field of learning is honoured in proportion to the honour and esteem in which its subject matter is held, mysticism is the most honourable of sciences, for its subject, God, is the highest and most honoured of subjects. It follows, then, that there is greater need for knowledge of its standards, principles and measures.
>
> When it is said that mysticism does not bow to any logic or standard it means that mystical insight lies beyond the boundaries of all external and conventional logic and standard and not that it has none of its own. All enlightened and God-realised sages agree that intuitive and direct inner perception possesses its own particular measure and standard. This standard applies to each individual according to his particular background and level of spiritual realisation, so that at each specific stage it enables him to differentiate, distinguish and identify the variety of spiritual perceptions, inspirations, revelations, manifestations and phenomena experienced by seekers. It is through this standard and

yardstick that the spiritual seeker can differentiate between divinely revealed inspiration, revelation and guidance and demonic manifestations that must not be relied upon and trusted. This is how the illuminated masters have described this standard:

A standard is that by reference to which one can discern correct statements and actions and categorise them. This standard and logic is none other than justice, which is the shadow and manifestation of the unity of Truth, which includes the sciences of the religious law, the esoteric spiritual path and the supreme Reality. This is so since this standard is accessible only to those who have reached the One that lies beyond unity and multiplicity. The standard of those who perceive only the world of appearances is the religious law (*shari'at*), while that of those who perceive the inner realities is a rational faculty illuminated by divine light, that of the spiritually select is the science of the spiritual path and finally that of the select of the select, that is the masters who have reached the highest spiritual state, is divine justice, which is attained only by the perfect man (*insān-e kamīl.*) This is why the spiritual master and guide (*shaykh*) is defined as a perfect man who has attained complete mastery over the religious law, the spiritual path (*tarīqat*) and the Truth (*haqīqat*) that lies beyond them. He knows all the diseases that can afflict the human soul and the way to cure it. He can improve the soul, and, if it has the proper aptitude, guide it. If a man does not have these qualities he cannot be called a perfect man. In other words, divine law and standard so ordains that he must have complete command over all aspects of the religious law, the esoteric spiritual path and the Truth. [338]

5. Forms of Knowledge and Insight Inherited by the Sūfīs

Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī mentions a number of forms of knowledge and maintains that they are all both specific and general, for example revelation, which is particular to prophets and messengers of God but in some manner, is also bestowed on other creatures such as bees. Another example is inspiration, which is particular to highly advanced saints who are blessed and favoured by God. However, it is experienced by other mystics and spiritual masters as well. A still third example is direct intuitive perception,

which is specific to spiritual seekers but which also extends, in both true and distorted forms, to various types of mystics, priests and magicians.[339]

Following the above remarks, he says:

> Keep in mind that the knowledge, wisdom and insight found among the Sūfīs, that is, among those who seek God, is inherited through direct spiritual perception and realisation and not through acquisition and learning from others.[340]

He then divides these inherited forms of knowledge into two kinds. The first type is knowledge and insight that the mystic receives directly from God and the second type is knowledge gained through such intermediaries as the universal intelligence [intellect?], the universal soul and the universal man. This is why Sūfī knowledge is referred to as inherited knowledge. In other words, the Sūfīs inherit it from their spiritual mother and father; that is, the universal intellect and the universal soul, and these intermediaries are, in turn, the true and spiritual inheritors of the universal man and the universal woman. This is what the Messenger (SA) meant when he said that religious scholars are the inheritors of the prophets. The Qur'ān refers to these individuals as those who have true knowledge and correct interpretation of the divine teachings.[341]

Jesus (A) is referring to the same inherited knowledge when he says:

> O Children of Israel, do not say that knowledge is in the sky and can be had by whoever climbs up to it or that it is in the depths of the Earth and can be claimed by those who dig down to reach it or that it is on the other side of the seas and can be attained by those who cross them. Knowledge lies within you, at the very centre of your soul, and is an aspect of your innermost self and nature. Adopt the ways of the men of spirit and the manners of the righteous and then your whole being shall be filled with knowledge and wisdom.[342]

The Prophet (SA) has also said:

> Whoever sincerely worships God for forty days shall have springs of knowledge and wisdom flow from his heart to his tongue.[343]

At this point, Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī provides another explanation of the idea that inherited knowledge is exclusive to mystics:

Inheritance can be only of two sorts: spiritual or material, and in neither case can experts in the exoteric religious law have any share in it, for material inheritance from God is meaningless and if reference is to material inheritance from the Prophet (SA), such inheritance will belong to his children and family members. Now, as to spiritual inheritance, this also cannot belong to scholars of the exoteric religious law for two reasons: the first involves indications found in the Traditions, and the second is the fact that they themselves view their knowledge as acquired and not inherited.[344]

Finally, following a long discussion, he expresses his view of the issue under consideration in the following manner:

> Inherited knowledge, wisdom and insight are not acquired since nowhere is acquired knowledge referred to, either literally or connotatively, as inherited. Thus, no science or knowledge that must be acquired can be inherited, and neither those who possess it shall be considered as inheritors. For this reason, all examples of acquired and formal knowledge lie outside the category of inheritance and their possessors outside the category of inheritors . . . . Now that we have clarified this point and have distinguished inherited knowledge from that which is acquired, you must try to prepare yourself to receive this inherited knowledge so that you shall be considered as one of the inheritors. [345]

At this point, Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī summarises the most significant teachings of mysticism, philosophy and theology concerning ontology, proving the existence of God, the attributes of God, the genesis of creatures, the hierarchy of beings, the creation of the universe, categories of objects, the real nature of objects, etc.[346] Furthermore, in order to demonstrate better the treatment of these issues in the aforementioned fields of learning, he provides special charts.[347] Finally, concerning his motivation in presenting this brief report he provides the following explanation:

. . . so that no one should imagine that mystics and men of God and spirit are ignorant of the principles and rules of philosophy and theology and cannot set forth rational arguments and positions concerning philosophical and theological issues, so that they realise that this is not the case and that mystics have the necessary prowess in these fields also. However, it is clear to men of the spirit that theological and philosophical principles and rules lack validity and reality and do not yield reliable results. Thus, realising this truth, they turn away from books and learning, turn to God and seek to experience the Truth directly, so that free of the intermediation of logic and argument they may drink from the fountain of spirit and intuition, since, as the saying goes, what is evident requires no proof or explanation. [348]

Sufi Knowledge in Mulla Sadra

Shahram Pazouki,
Iranian Institute of Philosophy, Iran

Abstract

In the history of Islamic philosophy, Mulla Sadra is usually mentioned as a philosopher who differs from the peripatetics merely in his attempt to combine philosophy with Sufism. At least in the case of his epistemology, however, this is not the case. As a Sufi, or *'arif*, Mulla Sadra tends to use philosophy for the purpose of providing a justification for his Sufi ideas.

The way of Sufism in the Islamic world, especially in Iran, is also called *'irfan*, knowledge or gnosis. According to Sufism, the goal of the journey toward God is finding perfect knowledge or gnosis of the truth (*Haqq*) and being. However, this knowledge has different degrees, which are obtained at the various stations of the Sufi path. This is why the Sufi is also called *knower* (*'arif*). For the first time, in his *Revivification of the Science of Religion*, Ghazali proved that the true knowledge the Qur'an commends believers to seek is Sufi knowledge. Referring to this idea, Mulla Sadra tries to revive true knowledge, and to build a philosophical system on its basis. Sufi knowledge is the knowledge by presence (*huduri*) found in the heart through its purification. Contrary to this, Philosophical knowledge, especially among the peripatetics, is conceptually mediated (*husuli*). In addition to knowledge by presence, which is the foundation of the knower and the known and the creative power of the soul, have a basis in Sufism for which Mulla Sadra tries to provide philosophical argumentation. Mulla Sadra's essay, *Seh Asl* (*Three Principles*), the only extent work written by him in Persian, is especially important for substantiating his view that true knowledge is Sufi knowledge. After disparaging different kinds of alleged knowledge, he holds true knowledge to be Sufi knowledge that can only be attained through purification of the heart. In this article it is shown that Mulla Sadra's conception of knowledge is drawn from Sufism,

and that the major themes of his epistemology are illuminated through an exegesis in terms of his commitment to Sufism.

The problem of perception as expounded by Muslim philosophers and Sufis is essentially different from what is proposed in Western philosophy, especially from Descartes and Kant until the present. One of the most important factors in the modern Western problem of perception is the opposition between subject and object which results from the new definition of man as subject and the external world as the object of man's perceptions. The modern senses of subject and object existed in neither Greek nor medieval philosophy. In Islamic philosophy, there are no equivalents for these terms in their modern meanings, and what are called *dhin* (mind) and *'ayn* (entity) are completely different from what are meant by subject and object, although they are commonly used to translate the Western terms.

In Islamic thinking, knowledge and perception are not merely human activities, for they also have a divine origin, as existence has a divine origin. The divine origin of perception has been propounded in the various schools of Islamic thought in different ways and with different emphases. For example, among the Muslim philosophers, the epistemology of the peripatetic places more emphasis on discursive reasoning (*bahthi*), while Sufi epistemology places more emphasis on the divine origin of intuition (*shuhud*). Between these two schools, the Illuminationist philosophers (*Ishraqiyun*) come closer to the Sufis, and Mulla Sadra, as a philosopher with Illuminationist taste, tries to build his epistemology on a Sufi basis. Thus, his concept of knowledge is a Sufi concept in philosophical garb.

In order to explain the Sufi aspects of Mulla Sadra's epistemology, I should make clear at the outset what is meant by Sufism is not the same as what is called mysticism in the West, at least in contemporary usage. Mysticism is more concerned with feelings while Sufism implies a kind of knowledge. This goes back to the very concept of faith (*iman*) in Islam. Islamic faith is not only a way to salvation. It also brings a heartfelt knowledge caused by the unveilings (*kashf*) and intuitions (*shuhud*) of the believer. In Christianity (especially after Meister Eckhart) knowledge is a subsidiary issue, and mysticism came to be considered a subjective matter, completely divorced from the gnosis of being. in Islam, Sufism itself is called *'irfan*, which literally means knowing or gnosis. Sufis are *'urafa*, that is, people who have acquired true knowledge of existence. This sort of knowledge is not a relation between subject and object. There is no opposition between the *'arif* or knower and the external world. In fact, it is self-knowledge that ends in perception of existence. The *'arif* is a wayfarer (*salik*) who has traveled the path toward God, has reached the reality of existence (*haqiqat*), which is God, and has acquired a knowledge which is

the only true knowledge of existence. In this kind of epistemology, the more one attains various degrees of faith, the more this knowledge is attained.

In the history of Islamic thinking, dialectical theologians (*mutakalimun*) and peripatetic philosophers, by giving more emphasis to rational knowledge, failed to understand Sufi epistemology. This is why the Sufi *shaykhs* tried to revive this knowledge, an important example of which is the famous book of Imam Ghazali, *Ihya Ulum al-Din* (*Revivication of the Sciences of Religion*).[349] In his book, Ghazali did his best to revive this forgotton meaning of knowledge in the Islamic world. Sufis like Rumi and Ibn 'Arabi, and philosophers like Sohravardi,[350] who calls the metaphysics of this knowledge, *Hikmat al-Ishraq* (*Illuminative Wisdom*), reminded people of this knowledge. During the Safavid period Mulla Sadra did the same. Mulla Sadra calls his philosophy *al-hikmah al-muta'aliyyah* (transcendent wisdom) in order to indicate its Sufi character in contrast to peripatetic philosophy.[351]

Among his books, *Se 'Asl* (*Three Principles*)[352] has a special bearing on this subject. More than in any other of his works, it is in this book, which is the only Persian work that remains from him, that Mulla Sadra surveys this view by quoting from Ghazali (without attribution). In the beginning of this treatise, he defines this knowledge and way of perception, which, according to him, is the only true one; then he enumerates its differences from other sorts of knowledge, and emphasizes that it is a kind of intuitive knowledge by presence (*'ilm al-huduri*). Finally, after explaining how to obtain this knowledge, he turns to a detailed discussion of the obstacles to it. There are three obstacles, or according to Mulla Sadra, principles or roots, that prevent man from reaching true knowledge. Interestingly enough, these obstacles are not epistemological in the modern sense of the word, rather, they are obstacles to spiritual progress, for in the works of Mulla Sadra, epistemology is focused on self-knowledge because this is seen as the avenue for acquaintance with being.

There are three roots [of evil], which, for people of insight, are the chief devils that destroy the soul . . . . The other roots and sources of evil . . . are derived from them.[353]

The first root is, "ignorance of knowledge of the self, which is the reality of the human being."[354] The second source "is the desire for position, money and the tendency toward lusts . . . . [355]" The third one "is the temptations of the commanding soul (*nafs al-ammarah*) . . . that shows evil as excellent and excellence as evil."[356] In *Se 'Asl*, Mulla Sadra not only describes these roots of evil, he also explains the nature and main features of what he means by knowledge.

Here I will describe various aspects of the main characteristics of this knowledge and perception according to Mulla Sadra's treatment of them in *Se 'Asl*.

1. "What is meant by this knowledge is not the knowledge called philosophy or that which philosophers know."[357] The philosophers (by whom he means the peripatetics) as well as the dialectical theologians (*mutakallimun*) have not tasted it at all.[358] That is why they have tried to reject and blame the true men of knowledge, i.e., the Sufis.
2. This knowledge, like God's knowledge of things, is knowledge by presence.[359]
3. True knowledge is light.[360] Just as features of the material world are disclosed by the light of the sun, the light of knowledge and faith of the true gnostics (*'urafa*) discloses the realities of the worlds.[361]
4. This knowledge is the knowledge of one's self "which is the key to all knowledge."[362] "Anyone who does not have self-knowledge does not have a soul, for the existence of the soul is identical with light, presence and consciousness."[363]
5. In accordance with the saying of the Prophet, "Whoever knows himself knows his Lord," "remembering oneself causes one to remember God,"[364] and "God's remembrance of the self is identical with the self."[365] "After these premises it becomes clear that whoever does not know himself does not know God."[366] Nevertheless, "knowing the reality and essence of the self by the light of disclosure and certainty belongs only to the Sufis.[367]" Philosophers, though they have a great share of knowledge on this issue, their knowledge in comparison to that of the Sufis (*'urafa*) is negligible.
6. "Most scholars (*'ulama*) and philosophers have thought that the essence of humanity is the same in all, without any difference, but this is not true for the people of insight (the Sufis)."[368] "The degrees and stages of humanity varies from the lowest of the low to the highest of the high." So many men live by the animal soul and even lower while there are some who can say, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Truth."[369] Knowledge of the self and its stages, however, is difficult and is not gained except by the perfect ones.
7. This knowledge is identified with faith. "The true faith . . . is achieved by the one who has reached the stage of the light of the spirit." "The true believer is one who knows God (*'arif*)."[370]
8. Only through this knowledge are one's actions useful.[371]
9. Besides the bodily eye and ear, considered unreal, with which we see and hear, there are another eye and ear for man which are real. They are the eye and ear of the heart and result from the light of knowledge.[372] It is only by these that one sees the realities of the world.[373] But most of the theologians and philosophers want to find the truth by their vain intellects and bodily senses.

10. This knowledge is not acquired through the senses or the faculty of reason. "These senses, also in one respect are needed, but in another respect they are obstacles on the way. The need for these senses is due to the fact that in the beginning the soul is infinitely incomplete, potential, and devoid of all knowledge. These senses are like the tablet for a pupil, for they perceive images and forms of existents."[374] However, anyone who trusts sense perception, which is the source of error and deception, he will not obtain anything but weariness of the eye and perishing of vision and hearing as well as of reason and consciousness. "Even reason, let alone the senses, so long as it is not illuminated by the light of love, cannot reach its main ideal."[375]

From the point of view of man, in his relation to the external world, the main characteristic of this Sufi knowledge is that it is presentational. Knowledge by presence (*'ilm huduri*), is one of the most fundamental elements, if not the fundamental element, of the epistemology of Mulla Sadra.

Mulla Sadra holds that the perception of the reality of being is not possible except through direct observation and presence. He says, "So, knowledge of [the reality of existence] is either by presentational observation (*mushahadah huduri*) or by reasoning to it through its effects and implications, but then it is not apprehended except weakly."[376]

One of the main divisions of knowledge is between *knowledge by presence* (*'ilm huduri*) and *acquired knowledge* (*'ilm husuli*). The former is direct while the latter is mediated through forms. In his definition of knowledge by presence, Mulla Sadra says, "Sometimes knowledge of a thing is of a kind that the being of the knowledge is identified with the object known."[377] In defining acquired knowledge, he says, "Sometimes [it is] of a kind that the being of the knowledge and the known thing are two different units of absolute being. They are two different beings that are not unified existentially . . . . We call this kind of knowledge acquired or passive knowledge."[378]

The famous instance of knowledge by presence accepted by all Muslim philosophers, including Mulla Sadra, is the knowledge that abstract things have of themselves,[379] like the perception the soul has of itself in which any sort of intermediary is unimaginable. Knowledge by presence has various characteristics. First, it can be neither true nor false, and does not admit of doubt, for these features only apply to cases in which there can be some correspondence between the perception and the thing perceived. According to the traditional theory of truth, i.e., the correspondence theory, which is also accepted in Islamic philosophy, for the most part, the correspondence of

forms with objects is the main element of acquired knowledge. Thus, truth is defined as this correspondence of intellect with the external world (*adequatio intellectus et rei*). However, in knowledge by presence, the known is present for the knower in its very reality, and there is no distinction between them on which basis they could be said to correspond or fail to correspond.[380] Second, while the Muslim peripatetics divide acquired knowledge into two kinds, knowledge of concepts (*tassawurat*) and knowledge of assertions (*tasdiqat*), this division does not apply to knowledge by presence which by definition is without intermediary, while concepts and assertions are themselves intermediaries.[381] Third, since knowledge by presence cannot be divided into concept and assertion, it is beyond the scope of discursive thought and reasoning. Sufis consider knowledge by presence to be perfected through mystical unveilings and intuitions. The veil of being is parted for the wayfarer (*salik*) who has completed the stages of the journey to the Truth (*haqq*), and thus he attains perfect knowledge by presence.

Historically, Western philosophers have paid scant attention to knowledge by presence, and even discussions of self-knowledge are primarily concerned with acquired knowledge of the self. For philosophers like Parmenides, however, epistemology and ontology are identified, and in the terminology of Islamic philosophy, it seems that his epistemology is based on knowledge by presence. The Muslim philosophers have discussed knowledge by presence at length. Because of their definition of knowledge as conceptually mediated, the peripatetic philosophers restricted knowledge by presence to knowledge of one's own soul. Illuminationist philosophers expounded knowledge by presence in their philosophy, however, because of the influence of Sufism on their thought. Although Sohravardi did not devote an independent chapter to this subject, his epistemology focuses on the notion of knowledge by presence, or in his own more precise terminology, *illuminative knowledge by presence*.[382] He says, "Intellection [i.e., knowledge] is the same as the presence of a thing to an abstract essence, or in other words, it can be said that it is the nonexistence of the absence of a thing for it. This is a complete definition, for it includes both perception of one's self and others."[383]

According to his metaphysics of light and darkness, knowledge and apprehension are the same sort of thing that light is. Apprehension is the appearance (*zuhur*) of a thing, and appearance is identified with radiance (*nuriyat*). He denies the peripatetic theory of abstraction and holds that the criterion of apprehension is radiance.[384]

Mulla Sadra tried to address the problem from the differing points of view of the theologians, peripatetics, the illuminationists, and the Sufis. He discusses and examines their views, and finally reaches the conclusion, in agreement with the Sufis, that the only real knowledge is knowledge

by presence. After rejecting various theories of knowledge, including the theory that knowledge is the idea of a thing impressed in the mind, he concludes that knowledge is a kind of presentational existence. This is the second characteristic of knowledge for Mulla Sadra, which is derived from the first, namely, that it is presentational. He considers knowledge to be not an essence but a sort of existence in the mind. He says, "Theosophers (*hukama*), except for a small group of literalists, are in agreement on this issue, that aside from this apparent existence that is observable to all, things have different existences or appearances called mental existence (*wujud dhini*)."[385]

Mental Existence is one of the topics handed down directly to Mulla Sadra from the Sufis. It is based on the famous ideas of the oneness of being (*wahdat al-wujud*) and the fundamentality of existence (*asalat al-wujud*) held by Mulla Sadra. Existence is a unitary reality having different stages starting from divine Ideas (*'ayan al-thabitah*) and descending to material existence. Mental existence is also one of its stages. However, each of them is a manifestation, called by the Sufis a *hadrat*, an honorific title from the same root as *huduri*, meaning *presence*, of one divine reality.[386] Everything has an appropriate manifestation in each *hadrat*. Mind or the soul of man is also a stage of being, that is, it is a *hadrat*. In this way, the apprehension of a thing is the existence of that thing as manifest in the *hadrat* of the soul. This is the manifestation of the same thing in its mental existence as is also manifest in material existence. Thus it is that knowledge (*'ilm*), the known (*ma'lum*), and the knower (*'alim*) are united, as will be explained in detail in what follows.

We have seen that the origins of the difference between knowledge by presence and acquired knowledge go back to the question of the ultimate source of human knowledge, whether it is essence or existence. If it is essence, knowledge will be acquired, while if it is existence, human knowledge will be knowledge by presence. Where the known object is its essence, knowledge of it will be conceptually mediated, but where the known object is existence, knowledge of it will be by presence.

In the *Asfar*, Mulla Sadra begins in harmony with the peripatetic philosophers, holding that knowledge and apprehension are essences of the category of mental qualities, but he eventually arrives at his main idea that the reality of knowledge is nothing but existence. He says, "Knowledge is not something negative, like abstraction from matter, nor is it a relation, rather it is an existential fact . . . . It is a pure actual being unmixed with nothingness. Insofar as knowledge is purified from mixing with nothingness, it is all the more so knowledge."[387] As appears from his words, Mulla Sadra denies theories according to which knowledge is to be considered a process of abstraction, as well as those according to which knowledge is a relation between the knower

and the known, as is found in the works of Imam Fakhr Razi. The reality of knowledge is the complete presence of the object known to the knower.

Mulla Sadra even traces acquired knowledge to knowledge by presence. He held that without knowledge by presence, acquired knowledge would be invalid. Most of Mulla Sadra's commentators have emphasized this. For example, 'Allamah Tabataba'i, one of his contemporary advocates, says, "Acquired knowledge is a mental regard of things that the intellect cannot avoid. It is derived from what is known by presence."[388] According to him, after this knowledge by presence, mind begins to apprehend the essence of things, and in fact, it is the mind that can change knowledge by presence into acquired knowledge.

However, the world of being is a world in which existents are separated from one another, each of which is absent to the other. So, how can existents in this separated and absent condition become present for human beings? In the view of the Sufis, and following them, Mulla Sadra, through the perceived proximity between being and knowledge by presence, existence and knowledge by presence are finally found to become united and to denote a single reality. There is also an indication of this in the fact that the Arabic word for existence, *wujud*, is from the same root as *wajd*, meaning finding or apprehending. At the level of knowledge by presence, the differences among existents disappear and all are gathered in the radiance of knowledge, and they emerge from absence to presence. According to Mulla Sadra, "Knowledge is nothing but the presence of being without a veil."[389]

At this point we arrive at the question of what, according to Mulla Sadra, is the reality of knowledge. His answer is, "Knowledge is one of those realities for which its being is the same as its essence."[390] This is true about existence itself because its essence is nothing but existence. Thus, when the question about the essence of knowledge is raised, the answer will be that it is nothing but its existence. Where existence and essence are the same, no logical definition is possible. Mulla Sadra says, "All existents become apparent to the mind by knowledge, so how can knowledge appear by means of anything but knowledge?" [391] The reality of knowledge, like the reality of existence, is light and presence. It is because of this that in his division of the branches of philosophy Mulla Sadra not only places the topic of knowledge in ontology, but he takes knowledge to be one of the primary categories of being, and he considers its treatment to belong to *philosophia prima*. He goes on to say, "One of the essential accidents of being qua being . . . is to be knower, knowledge or the known."[392]

If, however, the topic of knowledge is one of the problems of existence, and the reality of existence cannot be apprehended except through knowledge by presence and direct intuition, then insofar as man lacks self-knowledge and is ignorant of the presence of himself to himself, he will not grasp the

meaning of knowledge by presence. It is here that ontology, epistemology and self-knowledge, according to Mulla Sadra, approach one another.

Like the other great Sufis, Mulla Sadra considers self-knowledge to be the origin of all wisdom. In testimony to this he refers to the well known saying of the Prophet, "He who knows himself knows his Lord." The ultimate goal of the journey to God is the gnosis of Him, which is the gnosis of being. It is the apprehension of the presence of man to himself. In the horizons of his being, man contemplates existence. When the Sufi speaks of witnessing truth, it is always accompanied by the unveiling of being and knowledge by presence.

In his search for knowledge by presence, Mulla Sadra opens a new chapter in epistemology, his famous idea of the union of the intelligent knower (*'aqil*) and what is intelligible (*ma'aqul*). Although this topic is usually described in terms of the intellect, Mulla Sadra claims in various writings that it is much more comprehensive and includes all the cognitive faculties. Regarding one of the arguments for this he writes, "This reasoning is also applicable to concepts of prehension, imagination and perception."[393] So, we find here a union of the knower and the known in a very broad sense not restricted to the intellect. Mulla Sadra uses the terms *object known by essence (ma'lum bil dhat)* for the existent in the external world and *object known by accident (ma'lum bil-arad)* what is perceived. Here the void between subject and object is removed. The final consequence of the fact that knowledge is presentational is that the knower and the known achieve union at the stage of knowledge, just as the Sufis had taught.

Mulla Sadra has dealt with this issue in various works, including his *Masha'ir*, where, after proving that God has knowledge of Himself and other things through Himself, he goes on to demonstrate the theory of the union of the knower and the known by a proof called *burhan tadayuf (the argument from correlativity)*.[394] According to this argument, the intelligent knower and the intelligible known are correlative. Whenever there is a knower there must be something actually known, and vice versa. They are the same. From one aspect of the relation it is knower, and from another it is the known.[395]

Mulla Sadra is proud of having discovered this idea and in the *Asfar* he asserts that it is one of the most difficult and complicated of all philosophical problems. None of the Muslim philosophers since Ibn Sina, Sohravardi and Tusi had been able to solve this problem, and he, after tearfully beseeching God, was inspired.[396]

Peripatetic philosophers did not accept this view,[397] and Mulla Sadra reached this position through his Sufi ideas.[398] According to Ibn Sina, cognition is a quality of the soul, and the knowledge the soul has of things other than itself is acquired knowledge, like the addition of accidents

to a subject. The accidents are not united with the subject, but a kind of appending obtains, like the color of a flower that inherently subsists (*qiyam hululi*) in the flower without becoming identified with it. However, after proving the principle that the soul in its unity is all of its faculties, Mulla Sadra holds that the subsistence of mental forms for the soul is like the subsistence of an action in an agent (*qiyyam suduri*). This same relation exists between God and His creatures and between the soul and its perceptions.[399] In its unity, the soul has different modes and activities, all of which come from it. When the mind cognizes, it is not the case that it comes into the possession of the known, but rather it becomes the known. The relation between the knower and the known is a relation of unification. There is a difference between saying that the seed became man and that the table became white. In the former case, the seed is man, but in the latter case the table is not its color.

According to the theory of substantial motion of Mulla Sadra, the soul has a progressive motion in which its existence is intensified. The philosophers before Mulla Sadra held that there is a common essence for all men who differ solely because of their accidents. To the contrary, Mulla Sadra, following the Sufis, taught that individuals differed according to the degree of their existence of their souls.[400] These degrees correspond to the degrees of an individual's knowledge. Knowledge elevates the existence of the knower.

As we have seen, Mulla Sadra considers the union of the knower and the known to be like the kind of knowledge God has of His creatures, for this knowledge does not consist in the presence of the forms of creatures in the mind of God, but rather, His knowledge is the creatures themselves. With such knowledge, man becomes similar to God, for according to the Sufis, this similarity is acquired when man's knowledge is intuitive and presentational, not representational and acquired. In other words, when knowledge becomes the very existence of the known, being and knowledge become one. Accordingly, Mulla Sadra defines the goal of his Sufi philosophy as follows: "Wisdom is man's becoming an intelligible world similar to the objective world."[401] Here any gap between the knower and the known is eliminated. Being becomes the mirror in which man is depicted. Man is a mirror in which being is depicted. Both are mirrors depicting God.

Thus ends the first of Mulla Sadra's four journeys (*asfar*), that is, the journey from creatures to God. There is, however, another journey, more complete than the first, the journey from God to creatures. In this journey God becomes the mirror depicting His creatures and existence.[402]

The Notion and Significance of Ma'rifa in Sufism

Reza Shah-Kazemi, IIS-London

At the heart of the Sufi notion of *ma*ʿrifa there lies a paradox which is as fruitful in spiritual terms as it is unfathomable on the purely mental plane: on the one hand, it is described as the highest knowledge to which the individual has access; but on the other, the ultimate content of this knowledge so radically transcends the individual that it comes to be described in terms of 'ignorance'. In one respect, it is said to be a light which illumines and clarifies, but in another respect its very brilliance dazzles, blinds and ultimately extinguishes the one designated as a 'knower' (*al-*ʿārif).[403] This luminous knowledge that demands 'unknowing' is also a mode of being that demands effacement; and it is the conjunction between perfect knowledge and pure being that defines the ultimate degree of maʿrifa. Since such a conjunction is only perfectly realized in the undifferentiated unity of the Absolute, it follows that it can only be through the Absolute that the individual can have access to this ultimate degree of maʿrifa, thus becoming designated not as *al-*ʿārif, tout court, *but as al-*ʿārif *bi-'Llāh:* the knower through God. The individual is thus seen as participating in Divine knowledge rather than possessing it, the attribute of knowledge pertaining in fact to God and not himself. In this light, the definition of *ta*ṣawwuf given by *al-Junayd* (d. 298/910) applies, a *fortiori,* to *ma*ʿrifa:

'*Taṣawwuf* in essence is an attribute of God, but by image, it is an attribute of man.'[404]

* * *

This essay comprises three sections. The first will examine the appearance, within Sufism, of the notion of *ma*ʿrif*a* as distinctly spiritual knowledge in contrast to ʿilm as knowledge in the lower, rational sense of the term. The second will explore *ma*ʿrifa as a radically theocentric perspective,

that is, an orientation towards the Divine as such; this perspective acquires its distinctiveness largely in relation to the lesser perspectives—of fear, asceticism, love, and so on—that it transcends. The third part focuses directly on the highest content of *ma*ʿrifa in terms of spiritual realization; this might be summed up as the plenary realization of the metaphysical, as opposed to simply theological, principle of *taw*ḥīd, oneness.[405]

I—*Maʿrifa* as a notion in contrast to *ʿilm*

It is important to begin this discussion of the rise of *ma*ʿrifa as a distinct concept within the Sufi tradition by stressing that the spiritual knowledge to which the notion refers is rooted in the essential sources of Islamic spirituality, namely the Qur'ānic Revelation, on the one hand, and the spiritual realization of the Prophet, on the other.[406] Even if the essence of this knowledge opens out onto the Divine itself, and thereby transcends the domain of the created order—and, thus, the temporal order within which the historical Revelation descended[407]—nonetheless, the true Sufis always saw themselves as 'inheritors' of a knowledge that was realized in all its plenitude by the Prophet. To think otherwise is to attribute a false originality to those Sufis who first articulated aspects of this knowledge in terms of maʿrifa; all they did was to give original expression to hitherto largely implicit concomitants of this knowledge, pathways to it, and conditions for it—bearing in mind that the knowledge in question remains inexpressible in its essence. This being so, *maʿrifa* can but be alluded to, or hinted at, in terms that are intended more as orientational points of reference for those actively engaged in a spiritual discipline, than as rationalistic doctrines claiming exhaustively to define and describe the knowledge in question. According to *Ibn al-*ʿAr*abī:*

'Gnostics cannot impart their feelings to other men; they can only indicate them symbolically to those who have begun to experience the like.'[408]

The term *ma*ʿrifa does not figure in the Qur'ān, ʿilm being the term used for knowledge; and *al-*ʿAlīm, the All-Knowing, is given as a Divine Name, whereas *al-*ʿārif is not. Likewise, in the ḥadīth literature, ʿilm greatly overshadows *ma*ʿrifa. In this regard, two points should be made: first, the notion of ʿilm in the first generations of Islam was flexible enough to encompass knowledge both of the contingent domain and the transcendent order. The concept of knowledge at this time, along with a range of other concepts, had suppleness, a polyvalence, and a depth that was plumbed by the individual in the measure of his spiritual sensitivity: there was no need for a separate word to designate a specifically spiritual kind of knowledge.

Secondly, the Sufis who came to discuss *ma*ʿrifa as a distinct form of knowledge were able to quote and interpret certain key verses and

*a*ḥādīth as referring implicitly to the kind of knowledge they were seeking to elucidate.[409] One verse of central importance in this connection is the following:

I created not the jinn and mankind except that they might worship Me. (51: 56)

In his *Kitāb al-Luma'*, Abu Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988) in common with many other Sufis,[410] reports the comment of Ibn 'Abbās: the word 'worship' here means 'knowledge' *(ma'*rifa*)*, so that the phrase *illā li-ya'*budūn (except that they might worship Me) becomes *illā li-ya'*rifūn (except that they might know Me).[411] The very purpose of the creation of man thus comes to be equated with that knowledge of God which constitutes the most profound form of worship. This view dovetails with the ḥadīth qudsī (a holy utterance by God through the Prophet) so frequently cited by the Sufis: I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known, so I created the world.

The word for 'known' here is u'raf: ma'rifa thus appears again here as the ultimate purpose of creation in general; a purpose which is realized—and mirrored—most perfectly through the sage who knows God through knowing himself. For, according to another much stressed ḥadīth: Whoso knoweth himself k*nows his Lord*—again, the word for knowing is 'arafa. We shall return to this altogether fundamental principle in the final section of this essay.

The question that presents itself at this point is why it should have been necessary for the Sufis to adopt the term *ma'*rifa in contradistinction to 'ilm[412], a process that becomes visible from around the 3rd/9th century.[413] The answer to this question can be stated thus: it was in this period that various dimensions of the intellectual tradition of Islam—theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, to mention the most important—began to crystallize into distinct 'sciences' ('ulūm)—each of which laid claim to 'ilm as its preserve, thus imparting to 'ilm its own particular accentuation and content.[414] What these disciplines had in common was a confinement of the notion of 'ilm within the boundaries of formal, discursive, abstract processes of thought. For the Sufis to give the name 'ilm to their direct, concrete, spiritual mode of knowledge was henceforth to risk associating the spiritual path of realization with a mental process of investigation.[415] This is how *Hujwīrī* expresses the difference between the two types of knowledge:

> '. . . the Sufi Shaykhs give the name of *ma'*rifat (gnosis) to every knowledge that is allied with (religious) practice and feeling (ḥāl)[416] . . . and the knower thereof they call 'ārif. On the other hand, they give the name of 'ilm to every knowledge that is stripped of spiritual meaning and devoid of religious practice, and one who has such knowledge they call 'ālim.'[417]

In referring to the ḥāl or spiritual state that accompanies this higher knowledge, Hujwīrī draws attention to a deeper dimension of consciousness than the rational intellect; and one finds, parallel to this early shift of discourse from ʿilm to *ma*ʿrifa, a corresponding shift of emphasis from the ʿaql, intellect, to the *qalb*, heart, as the seat of spiritual awareness.[418] In addition, the Divine Name *al-haqq* is increasingly adopted as the most apt name by which to refer to God; combining the notions of reality and truth, it is *al-haqq* that engages the consciousness of the ʿārif. In other words, there is discernible here a three-fold change of doctrinal exposition regarding knowledge: first, in the nature of knowledge itself, from discursive to spiritual; then in the subject of knowledge, from the mind to the heart; and in the object of knowledge, from discrete, formal data, to the essential principles of Reality as such.

Before turning to the pronouncements of *Dhū'l-Nūn* and *Abu Yazid al-Bastami* as exemplifying the perspective of *ma*ʿrifa in this early period, it should be noted that in respect of all three elements in this new style of discourse, the influence of Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq is of great significance. It is important to bear in mind that in his time (d.148/765) the Sunnī-Shīʿite division was not as rigid as it was later to become, and that he should not only be seen as the sixth Imam of Shīʿism, but also a 'spiritual forebear' of the Sufis.[419] With regard to the concept of maʿrifa, he imparted to it the important connection with the heart:

'Maʿrifah qalbiyah is possibly the most important concept both for the mysticism of the Sufis and for the imāmī doctrines of the Shīʿīs.'[420]

And, as regards the name *al*-ḥaqq, Massignon argues, in his essay on the lexicography of Islamic mysticism, that it was from 'the *tafsīr* of Jaʿfar and the mystic circles of Kūfah that the term *al*-ḥaqq spread, through Dhū'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī and others, to become the classic name for God in taṣawwuf.'[421]

Another central aspect of maʿrifa that is found as part of al-Ṣādiq's legacy is the principle that only through God can God be known:

'Surely he alone knows God who knows Him by means of God *(bi'Llāh)*. Therefore whoso knows Him not by means of Him knows Him not.'[422]

He also expressed the ultimate subjective corollary of this mode of objective knowledge by stressing that no one has the right to say 'I' but God: to Him alone is subjective reality fully attributable. This is expressed in the following commentary on the theophany witnessed by Moses on Mount Sinai:

'It is not proper for anyone but God to speak of himself by using these words *innī anā*, "I am I". I [that is Moses, according to al-ṣādiq's commentary] was seized by a stupor (*dahsh*) and annihilation (*fanā'*) took place. I said then: "You! You are He who is and who will be eternally, and Moses has no place with You nor the audacity to speak, unless You let him subsist by your subsistence (*baqā'*)".'[423]

Quite apart from its value in helping to explain the ecstatic utterances (*shath*īyāt) of the Sufis, such as al-ḥallāj's 'I am the Truth' (*anā'l*-ḥaqq), these central aspects of spiritual knowledge clearly left their mark on the subsequent unfolding of Sufism in general, and the perspective of maʿrifa in particular.

Dhū'l-Nūn, who is generally credited with formulating for the first time the doctrine of maʿrifa in a distinctive fashion[424] clearly follows in the footsteps of al-ṣādiq in his oft-quoted statement regarding *al-ma*ʿrifatu bi'Llāh: 'I knew my Lord by my Lord; without my Lord I would not have known my Lord.'[425]

Although in certain of Abū Yazīd al-Basṭāmī's formulations, the two notions of *ma*ʿrifa and ʿilm appear synonymous[426], the difference between the two appears when he makes a dialectical contrast between the ʿārif and the ʿālim.

'The ʿārif sees the maʿrūf ('the known', i.e. the Absolute) while the ʿālim stays sitting with another ʿālim; the ʿālim asks, "What shall I do?", while the ʿ*ārif* asks, "What will He do?"'[427]

Attention is thus drawn to the fact that the possessor of ʿilm is bound by the knowledge that defines him as the subjective agent, thus keeping him on the human plane, discoursing with other ʿulamā'; while the ʿārif attains a concrete vision of the supreme object of his maʿrifa: hence he is no longer pre-occupied with his own acts, but with the acts of God, those manifestations of grace by which the ʿārif is drawn ever closer to Him. The ʿālim, meanwhile, is imprisoned within the delusion of autonomy and self-will—the inescapable concomitants of the notion that one is a 'knower' through one's own efforts; he thus continues to ask what he, as the agent, should do.

Moreover, according to Abū Yazīd, 'there is in ʿilm an ʿilm of which the ʿulamā' are ignorant'.[428] To know that God exists is a datum of which the ʿulamā' are aware; but to know this in depth means to know ultimately that God alone is, that all else is strictly nothing—it is of this knowledge that the ʿulamā' are ignorant. The ʿārif, moreover, is one who knows not only that God's Reality infinitely transcends the world, but also that it mysteriously penetrates all things:

> 'For whoever is close to God (*al*-ḥaqq), everything and every place is God, for God is everywhere and everything.'[429]

But then there intervenes an 'ignorance' on a higher plane, for the knower of the Truth (ʿārif-i ḥaqq) is also the jāhil (an ignorant person).[430] This statement evokes the saying attributed to the first Caliph of Islam, Abū Bakr: 'Glory be to Him who made the very incapacity to know Him to be the only path by which creatures may know Him.'[431] Since man as such cannot

come to know God as such—the gulf between the created intelligence and the increate essence remaining forever unbridgeable—the one who claims to have knowledge of God is a 'pretender' (*mudda'ī*). Dhū'l-Nūn states: 'Never pretend to possess ma'rifat'; and again, even more strongly: 'My greatest sin is my knowledge *(ma'rifat)* of Him.'[432]

Niffarī, whose important book, the Mawāqif, is widely regarded as one of the most rigorously 'gnostic' of all Sufi texts, likewise refers to the 'gnosis of the gnoses' *(ma'rifatu'l-ma'ārif)* in apophatic terms: it is, according to a divine inspiration, 'veritable ignorance of all things through Me'; he adds that the 'spring of knowledge' gushes forth from this ignorance, and 'whoso draws knowledge from the spring of knowledge draws knowledge and condition: but whoso draws knowledge from the flowing stream of knowledge . . . will gain no constant knowledge.'[433] What seems to be at issue here is the incommensurability between the essence of knowledge and the forms of its objects: in no way can this essence be equated with things which one can take as distinct forms of knowledge. If by 'knowledge' is meant taking cognisance of some object apart from itself, then the highest knowledge can only be termed an ignorance; on the other hand, if knowledge be defined exclusively in its most transcendent sense—that is, knowledge as such—then all other apparent modes of knowledge are themselves reduced to the status of ignorance. What these antinomian formulations seem to be alluding to is the fact that the 'ārif is aware both that he 'knows' through God, and that, qua individual, he cannot know the essence of knowledge: the principle of consciousness cannot itself be made an object of consciousness; or again: that which encompasses all things cannot itself be encompassed.

It is evident, in this light, why bewilderment (ḥayra, taḥayyur) is said to be the mark of the highest sages. According to Dhū'l-Nūn: 'Those who know God best are the most bewildered regarding Him.'[434] On the one hand, then, the light of the sun of this knowledge dazzles and blinds, the closer one gets to it; but on the other hand, the resulting bewilderment does not prevent the 'ārif from seeing all things clearly by the light of the sun, and then, ultimately seeing the sun, but then only by its light, and not by one's own vision.[435]

These points will be further discussed in the final section of the essay. For now, it suffices to note the significance of the rise of the notion of ma'rifa in the Sufi tradition; and to appreciate how certain Sufis in this early period used the limitative notion of 'ilm as a dialectical counterpoint, a rational foil, in relation to which the transcendent degrees of knowledge—and, very importantly, the path of spiritual discipline leading thereto—would stand out in sharp relief.

II—*Ma'rifa* as a Transcendent Perspective

One significant aspect of the perspective of *ma*'rifa is that it transcends limited, less complete, less essential perspectives, without necessarily abolishing them on the level to which they are proportioned. It is a perspective which relativises all things in the face of the Absolute, but also, by that very fact, puts all things in their proper place, giving each thing its due. In other words, it 'goes beyond' but also 'returns'; it both surpasses and comprises. This dual function can be seen to operate in respect of the following elements of the Sufi tradition:

1) ascetic worship (*zuhd/'ibāda*) according to the perspective of fear (*makhāfa*);
2) the perspective of love (*maḥabba*);
3) states (*aḥwāl*) and miraculous phenomena (*karāmāt*).

1) To say that the perspective of *ma'rifa* transcends lower perspectives is another way of asserting the primacy of divine grace over individual effort in the path of spiritual realization. Any religious outlook or orientation that comprises any implicit tendency to return to the individual ego as the preponderant agent in the spiritual endeavour is regarded as a subtle form of *shirk*, that is, polytheism or more literally, 'associationism': one is 'associating' the subjective ego with the objective Real. In this sense, *ma'rifa* might be said to be a perspective of radical objectivity, a perspective that is predicated entirely on the supreme Object, by Whose grace, alone, perfect knowledge is consummated.

It is for this reason that we find another great exponent of *ma'rifa* in the early period, al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī[436] saying: 'Gnosis is a bounty which God gives to His servant when He opens for him the door of favour and grace, beginning without the servant's being worthy of that.'[437]

The relative can never be said to be worthy of knowing the Absolute; no matter how much worship is offered, if the devotee is not aware of this fundamental truth, not even a lifetime of pious devotion will avail him in respect of the highest knowledge. His worship, in other words, becomes a veil obscuring the light of this knowledge. According to Abū Yazīd:

> 'Three types of men are the most obscured from God: the scholar (*al-'ālim*) by his erudition, the pious worshipper (*al-'ābid*) by his piety, and the ascetic (*al-zāhid*) by his asceticism.'[438]

It is against the background of *zuhd* that the intellective character of *ma'rifa* stands out most sharply. Abu Yazīd calls the *zāhid* a mere 'traveller' (*sayyār*) while the *'ārif* is a 'flyer' (*tayyār*).[439] Here, a step-by-step progression, in a horizontal dimension, by natural means, is contrasted with a sudden vertical ascent, a flight that is possible only by means of the grace of God.

Ḥārith al-Muḥasibī refers to *ma'rifa* as 'a fathomless sea'; it is, he says, 'before all things and the origin of all things'.[440] In terms of this metaphor, the presumption of a man trying to attain to *ma'rifa* by his own efforts is analogous to his seeking to be one with the ocean by drinking it all up, rather than by being drowned in it.

Al-Muḥāsibī, despite being known principally for his method of critical self-examination (*muḥāsaba*—whence his title), was very critical of those ascetics who became fixated in their practices; he condemned the fanatical excesses of a well-known category of recluses, describing the absurd lengths to which they went in their efforts to withdraw absolutely from the course of normal life. What he and others like him saw was that asceticism had come to be practised as an end in itself.[441] In other words, action that is centred on the individual stifles the liberating graces inherent in that knowledge which is centred on God.

Ibn 'Aṭā'illāh al-Iskandarī (d.709/1309) stands out as one of the greatest luminaries of *ma'rifa*. In his masterpiece, the *ḥikam*,[442] he succinctly expresses the asymmetry between acts—ascetic or otherwise—and the grace of Divine Self-revelation that gives rise to *ma'rifa*:

'If He opens a door for you thereby making Himself known, pay no heed if your deeds do not measure up to this . . . Do you not know that He is the one who presented the knowledge of Himself (*ta'arruf*) to you, whereas you are the one who presented Him with deeds? What a difference between what he brings to you, and what you present to Him!'[443]

This is not say, of course, that all action is to be abandoned; for there are certain actions which predispose the soul to receive the grace of Self-revelation, and others which thicken the veils of ignorance. The principal positive act most strongly advocated by the *'ārifūn* is the invocation of the name of God (*dhikr Allāh*). In another *ḥikma*, Ibn 'Atā'illāh stresses the importance of maintaining the *dhikr*, and also reveals the relationship between invocation, the grace attracted thereby, and the realization of *tawḥīd* (to which attention will turn in the next section):

> 'Do not abandon the invocation because you do not feel the Presence of God therein. For your forgetfulness *of* the invocation of Him is worse than your forgetfulness *in* the invocation of Him.

> Perhaps he will take you from an invocation with forgetfulness (*ghafla*) to one with vigilance (*yaqẓa*), and from one with vigilance to one with the Presence of God (*ḥuḍūr*), and from one with the Presence of God to one wherein everything but the Invoked (*al-Madhkūr*) is absent. "And that is not difficult for God."'[444]

To accomplish the invocation in the spirit of *ma'rifa* is to offer oneself to the grace of God, it is not reliance upon one's own actions; it is in relation to the one who accomplishes his invocation and other 'deeds' in the spirit of self-direction (*tadbīr*), with a view to appropriating to himself the anticipated fruits, that 'deeds' will not avail in respect of *ma'rifa*.

In connection with acts, the highest degrees of *ma'rifa* transcend the domain in which the polarity good vs evil—and thus all virtues considered in their purely human aspect—has any reality. When asked regarding the Qur'ānic injunction to command the good and forbid the evil, Abū Yazīd answers thus: 'Be in a domain wherein commanding the good and forbidding of evil do not exist; for both of these exist in the province of the created order. In the Presence of Unity neither the one nor the other exists.'[445]

This transcendence of virtues effected by the consciousness of the Divine Unity notwithstanding, human virtue is an absolute pre-requisite for the rise of *ma'rifa*: in respect of integral knowledge it is a condition that is necessary, but not on its own sufficient. In a treatise entitled *What the Seeker Needs*, Ibn al-'Arabī writes: 'Above all, what you need is high morals, good character, proper behaviour . . . '[446]

Virtue is not only a condition for *ma'rifa*, it is also a consequence; for the *'ārif* comes to a realization of the divine qualities, appropriately transcribed and reflected, within his own soul. According to Dhū'l-Nūn, the comportment of the *'ārif* towards others is like that of God: kind, supportive, generous, and so on, through the acquisition of the beautiful divine virtues (*takhalluqan bi-akhlāqi'Llāhi'l-jamīla*—a reference to the *ḥadīth* instructing the same).[447]

Excessive asceticism, then, along with the perspective of fear to which it is attached, is surpassed in *ma'rifa*; but this does not mean that either are excluded: one does not become an *'ārif* by renouncing action and eschewing fear. On the contrary: fear of God is a necessary component of *ma'rifa*, even if it does not exhaust the contents of the *'ārif*'s consciousness. 'Aṭṭār comments on Dhū'l-Nūn's statement to the effect that the *'ārif* has no attribute and yet can be described as one who fears (*khā'if*) by saying that the one who has no fear can never be an *'ārif*. The verse from the Qur'an is also quoted: *Only those of his slaves that are the knowers fear God.*[448]

Hujwīrī expresses very well the perspective of *ma'rifa* in his remarks to a member of one of the more extreme members of the group known as the Malāmatiyya; these were Sufis who deliberately acted in strange ways so as to provoke the blame of the orthodox; their aim was to eradicate in their souls all traces of ostentation and hypocrisy, that is, any inner desire to win praise from others. He reports the following conversation he had with one Malāmatī:

> 'O brother, what is your object in these perverse actions?' He replied: "To make the people non-existent in regard to myself.' 'The people,' I said, 'are many, and during a lifetime you will not be able to make them non-existent in regard to yourself; rather make yourself non-existent in regard to the people . . . If you wish no one to see you, do not see yourself. Since all your evils arise from seeing yourself, what business have you with others?'[449]

From the viewpoint of *ma'rifa*, this preoccupation with one's secret imperfections crowds out the more important orientation one should have: that is, towards the perfection of God. Al-Tirmidhī expresses this in a letter to one of the leaders of the group, Abū 'Uthmān Sa'īd al-Nisābūrī:

> 'We have found that knowledge is of two kinds: knowledge of the soul . . . and knowledge of God. If the servant keeps himself occupied in trying to know the defects, he will become involved throughout his life, and will always be attempting to get free. But if he occupies himself in pursuit of the knowledge of God, he will find this to be his cure, because this knowledge will revitalise his heart and mortify his carnal soul. If the soul is mortified through the suffusing divine brilliance, the heart will receive direct revivifications from God; and what defect could possibly remain attached to him?'[450]

2) Likewise, in respect of *maḥabba*, one finds that *ma'rifa* goes beyond it and also pre-eminently includes it: there is a simultaneous transcendence *and* a plenary realization of love of God. On the one hand, while the folk of love (*ahl al-maḥabba*) are considered to be those who seek the Beloved, the folk of gnosis (*ahl al-ma'rifa*) are themselves sought by the Beloved, in the contemplation of Whose beauty they are submerged. His love for me, says Abū Yazīd, preceded mine for Him.[451] In other words, from the perspective of *ma'rifa*, the manifestation of human love for God is itself an effect of God's pre-existing and eternal love of man.

While the lovers contemplate the pleasures of Paradise as reward, the gnostics are engulfed in pure light, according to Abū Yazīd, who also asserts that a single grain of *ma'rifa* in the heart is better than a thousand palaces in Paradise.[452] This 'one grain' of true knowledge may be said to surpass paradisal delights in the very measure that quality predominates over quantity: the uncreated essence of love, even if only glimpsed in the heart, immeasurably outweighs any number of its manifested—albeit heavenly—forms. It is not that the *'ārif* eschews love; on the contrary, only the *'ārif* has love in the fullest sense, given that 'only he can love God who knows Him', according to al-Ghazālī;[453] and, if love increases in proportion to knowledge[454], he who knows God best loves Him most.

In practical terms, this love manifest itself as an imperturbable contentment (*riḍā'*) in all that life has to offer, insofar as everything that happens, good or evil, is an expression of the will of God. Since the *'ārif* knows with certitude that God ultimately wills only what is best, he remains content in every state. Thus, according to al-Muḥāsibī, worldly people react to affliction with impatience: afflictions will be for them punishments. Novices in the spiritual path react to affliction with patience: afflictions will be for them purification. While the *'ārifūn* react to affliction with contentment: afflictions will be for them signs of their being chosen by God.[455]

3) Turning now to the question of mystical states, although in one respect *ma'rifa* is itself sometimes viewed as a state, it is more often, and more essentially, regarded as a permanent awareness of God's all-encompassing reality; an awareness that subsists as an undercurrent throughout all the experiences of life in the world. Thus, Dhū'l-Nūn says that the true *'ārif* 'does not stay constantly in the same state, but he stays constantly with his Lord in all his states'. This is because, once the Real has been grasped aright, there is no need to depend on the continuation of specifically mystical 'states': what is real for us, he says, is *ma'rifa* and the revelation (*kashf*) of knowledge 'without this involving a *ḥāl*'.[456]

Abū Madyan (d.594/1198), another great representative of the *ma'rifa* tradition, succinctly expresses the relative nature of mystical states:

> '[Spiritual] states are masters for beginners because they determine their behaviour. But they are slaves for the advanced because they are under their control.'[457]

Note that Abū Madyan does not deny the occurrence of mystical states, only that such states do not in any way destabilise the

equilibrium of the 'ārif, an equilibrium produced by his knowledge of God. This is expressed by the idea of inward ecstasy coexisting with, rather than excluding, an outwardly sober comportment; the 'ārif, in other words, transcends the state of *sukr*, drunkenness, precisely by assimilating it within the station of *sahw*, sobriety; for, while ecstatic states are transient phenomena, spiritual sobriety is rooted in the immutability of the supreme Object of knowedge.[458] Ibn 'Aṭā'illāh explains this important aspect of *ma'rifa* by referring to three classes of people; the first are heedless of God, while the second and third have spiritual knowledge. The person belonging to the second class is one who is '. . . brought face to face with Reality (*al-ḥaqīqa*), the splendour of which is apparent to him. A traveller in the Path, he has mastered its extent, except that he is drowned in lights and does not perceive created things. His inebriety (*sukr*) prevails over his sobriety (*saḥw*), his union (*jam'*) over his separation (*farq*), his extinction (*fanā'*) over his permanence (*baqā'*), and his absence (*ghayba*) over his presence (*ḥudūr*).'

This might be seen as a more extensive description of the stage of the 'beginner' mentioned by Abū Madyan, one whose 'state' surpasses his 'station'. For his drunkenness in God prevails over his sobriety in the world, his inward sense of oneness with God prevails over his personal, existential separation from him, his extinction from his created being prevails over the subsistence of his personal identity, and his absence from the world prevails over his presence in it.

The more perfect sage, on the other hand, is one who

> *'. . . drinks, and increases in sobriety; he is absent, and increases in presence; his union does not veil him from his separation, nor does his separation veil him from his union; his extinction does not veil him from his permanence, nor does his permanence divert him from his extinction. He acts justly towards everyone and gives everyone his proper due.'*[459]

This more complete knowledge simultaneously comprises two angles of vision—or dimensions of reality—the created and the uncreated, thereby giving each its 'due', without allowing the one to veil the other.

Turning briefly to the question of miraculous phenomena, Abū Madyan curtly sums up the attitude of the true 'ārif:

'When you see a man displaying evidence of miracles and paranormal abilities, do not be attracted to him; look instead at how he practices commanding [the good] and forbidding [evil].'[460]

Likewise, and with even more simplicity, Ibn 'Aṭā'illāh says: 'Sometimes a charisma (*karāma*) is bestowed upon someone whose righteousness (*istiqāma*) is not perfect.'[461] Abū Yazīd says in the same vein: 'The saints do not rejoice at the answer to prayers which are the essence of miracles such as walking on water and moving in the air . . . Let not anyone who is perplexed by such things put any faith in this trickery.'[462] This attitude seems to be based on his personal experience: for it was precisely by eschewing such phenomena that his own enlightenment arose: 'During my novitiate, God used to bring before me wonders and miracles, but I paid no heed to them; and when He saw that I did so, He gave me the means of attaining knowledge of Himself.'[463]

It is to the intrinsic aspects of this knowledge of God, as the supreme content of *ma'*rifa, that discussion now turns.

III—Supreme Content of *Ma'rifa*: Knowledge of God's Oneness

As one approaches the summit of *ma'*rifa, the elements of mystery, paradox and bewilderment are sharpened. The inadequacy of words and formal thought is never felt more acutely than in the attempt to express the way in which knowledge of God is realized in the consciousness of the 'ārif. What needs to be stressed at the outset of this discussion is that no Sufi would ever regard it as possible to 'know' God as one 'knows' an object in the conventional cognitive sense. Only God knows God—this is frequently asserted by the Sufis. Only the infinite can 'know'—because it is—the infinite. The question then becomes: to what extent does the 'ārif realize identity of being with God, such that he can be said to 'know' God, not through himself, but through God?[464]

One way of approaching this question is to focus on the spiritual, as opposed to simply theological, meaning of *taw*ḥīd, the oneness of God. For while *taw*ḥīd, 'making one', on the theological plane means affirming that there is but one God as opposed to many gods, on the spiritual plane it means realizing that there is but one Reality. Attainment of identity with the sole Reality might be said to flow from this principial truth in the measure that the illusion of the autonomous existence of the world and the ego is concretely effaced. Thus, we have Ibn al-'Arabī saying that, 'The final end and ultimate return of the gnostics . . . is that the Real is identical with them, while they do not exist.'[465]

Dhū'l-Nūn expresses this same principle, while elaborating on the aspect of identity. The 'ārifūn, he says, 'are not themselves, but in so far as they exist at all, they exist in God. Their movements are caused by God, and their words are the words of God . . . ';[466] he then cites the concluding part

of a famous ḥadīth *qudsī*: 'When I love him (My slave), I am His hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks.'[467]

The point that must be inferred from the above ḥadīth is that God does not 'become' identical to the slave: there is no change of location for God. Rather, what is revealed to the slave is a pre-existing, albeit hidden, identity. What appears from the individual and mystical point of view as a 'descent' of God is, from the objective and metaphysical point of view, the affirmation of an immutable reality, or, in the words of Ibn al-ʿArabī, 'the extinction of that which never was . . . and the subsistence of that which never ceased to be'.[468]

This pre-existing identity is expressed in another ḥadīth *qudsī*, the importance of whose opening lines is stressed by the Emir ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jazāʾirī[469] as revealing the immanence of God's unique reality in all that exists: 'O son of Adam, I fell ill and you visited Me not . . . '[470]

This 'I' of God in each thing is the 'face' (*wajh*) of God (which is identified with the 'secret' (*sirr*) of each thing), and which is referred to in the Qur'ān: *Wheresoever ye turn, there is the Face of God*. The Emir writes: ' . . . he who looks with his face, that is to say, his secret, sees the face which God has in each thing; for in truth, only Allah sees Allah, only Allah knows Allah.'[471]

Al-Ghazālī sheds further light on the meaning of the two aspects of all created things in reference to the verse: *Everything perisheth except His Face (88: 28)*. ' . . . everything has two aspects, an aspect to itself and an aspect to its Lord: in respect of the first, it is Not-being; but in respect of the God-aspect, it is Being. Therefore, there is no Existent except God and the God-aspect . . . '[472]

Now it might be said that consciousness of the truth that there is no reality but the Divine Reality is itself constitutive of *ma*ʿrifa; the extent to which this truth is realized in depth will then be the criterion of the degree of *ma*ʿrifa attained.[473] For one can have a notional or purely mental understanding of this truth, a firm belief in it in principle, an inkling or 'taste' (*dhawq*) of its spiritual reality—derived from the first glimmerings of realization in the heart[474]—or else its plenary realization, which demands a concrete knowledge of one's own nothingness in the face of this Reality. Now, to speak of this knowledge of one's own nothingness leads to the discussion of the state of fanāʾ in relation to *ma*ʿrifa. For it is in this state that the individual may be said, paradoxically, to realize 'fully' his nothingness.[475]

Al-Ghazālī distinguishes between, on the one hand, gnostic sciences (*ma*ʿārif, pl. of *ma*ʿrifa) that are revealed only in the state of *fanā*'[476] and, on the other, the revelation of the sole reality of God that comes about in the state of *fan*āʾ.[477] It is the latter mode of extinction that concerns us here, for

it is from this state that derive the famous expressions of complete identity such as Abū Yazīd's 'Glory be to me!' and al-ḥallāj's 'I am the Truth'; and, as mentioned above, it is identity, alone, that justifies the proposition that the individual can participate in God's Self-knowledge, such that he can come to know God through God.

Now, while al-Ghazālī says that these words of lovers must be 'hidden away and not spoken of', he nonetheless affirms the reality of the absolute oneness of God that is revealed in the state of *fanā'*:

'They were drowned in the absolute Unitude, and their intelligences were lost in Its abyss . . . there remained nothing with them save Allāh . . . when this state prevails, it is called in relation to him who experiences it, Extinction, nay, Extinction of Extinction, for the soul has become extinct to itself, extinct to its own extinction; for it becomes unconscious of itself and unconscious of its own unconsciousness, since, were it conscious of its own unconsciousness, it would be conscious of itself.'[478]

He concludes the discussion by saying that the state is called *ittihād* ('union') 'in the language of metaphor'; and *tawhīd* ('making one') 'in the language of reality'.[479] There is a subtle linguistic difference here which expresses a distinction of fundamental importance: what appears from the mystical point of view as a merging of two previously distinct entities, the soul and God, is in fact, from the viewpoint of 'reality', the revelation of a oneness that brooks no alterity. 'Making one' means giving the unique reality of God its full due, recalling here the verse with which al-Qushayrī introduces his chapter on *ma*'rifa in the *Risāla*:[480] *They have not estimated God as He deserves to be estimated. (6: 91)*

As for the verbal expressions of identity in this state, from the point of view of *ma*'rifa, the 'I' in question is never that of the individual, but always that of God. Thus we find al-Junayd explaining Abū Yazīd's utterance 'Glory to me!' (*sub*ḥānī) as follows: 'The one who is annihilated in the vision of glory expresses himself according to what annihilates him.'[481]

The remarks of the Shaykh al-'Alawī in this connection should also be carefully noted: 'Extinction and submersion and annihilation come suddenly upon the Gnostic, so that he goeth out from the sphere of sense and loseth all consciousness of himself, leaving behind all his perceptions, nay his very existence. Now this annihilation is in the Essence of the Truth, for there floweth down over him from the Holiness of the Divinity a flood which compelleth him to see himself as the Truth's Very Self in virtue of his effacement and annihilation therein.'[482]

But the question now arises, at least from the discursive and logical point of view: how can the individual, as such, be said to 'know' anything at all when his specific identity and relative consciousness are utterly effaced; when he is not even 'conscious of his own unconsciousness'?

On the one hand, this is a paradox that explains why it is that Dhū'l-Nūn, and many others, have said that those who know God best are those who are most bewildered in regard to Him.[483] It is precisely because the 'ārif is no longer himself in this supreme state that it is said that God's Essence canot be 'known', even in this state. On the other hand, it can be said that this supreme knowledge is realized in the innermost consciousness of the 'ārif, that is, at a point of pure consciousness that is in the soul, but not of it.[484] This is another way of saying that it is God who knows Himself through the 'ārif. In this connection it is worth recalling that the very purpose of creation, according to the ḥadīth of the 'hidden treasure' cited above, is that God should be 'known'. Now, while the whole of the created order makes 'known', by manifesting, aspects of the hidden treasure, it is in man alone that God realizes a mode of Self-knowledge that is distinct both from this process of manifestation that constitutes Self-objectivation, and from His eternal knowledge of Himself in Himself, apart from all manifestation; for, as Ibn al-'Arabī says in his chapter on Adam in the *Fuṣūṣ* al-ḥikam: God wanted to see His own Essence 'in an all-inclusive object encompassing the whole [divine] Command, which, qualified by existence, would reveal to Him His own mystery. For the seeing of a thing, itself by itself, is not the same as its seeing itself in another, as it were in a mirror . . . '[485]

Continuing this effort at expressing in symbolic terms that which clearly transcends the domain of reason, it might be said that it is the return of the Divine ray of consciousness—immanent in, but not belonging to, the soul—back to the source of its projection, that constitutes the consummation of this mode of Divine Self-knowledge starting from relativity.[486] One might say—always bearing in mind the gulf that separates all such images from the ultimately inexpressible nature of spiritual realization—that this mode of knowledge is akin to a ray of sun-light returning to the sun: this ray is distinct from the sun in one respect, but, in another respect, its substance is none other than that of the source of its projection.

It might still be objected, however, that the individual as such can have no share in this knowledge by which God knows Himself through him; for this Divine Self-Knowledge would appear to pertain exclusively to different aspects of God, and hence something to which the created intelligence of man has no access. One way of responding to this objection would be, first, to recall our application of al-Junayd's definition of Sufism to *ma*'rifa: knowledge is in essence a divine attribute; only by image is it an attribute of man. Then, on this basis, one can assert that the knowledge of God that can be attributed to the 'ārif is an image, or a reflection, on the plane of refraction constituted by the individual intellect, of that Divine Self-knowledge which is realized within him; this Self-knowledge being consummated at that point of pure, uncreated consciousness that furnishes

the individual's innermost reality, his *sirr* or deepest identity.[487] Thus, the reality of God's Self-knowledge through the 'ārif is inversely reflected, within relativity, by the 'ārif's knowledge 'through God': this image, trace, or imprint of the supreme knowledge is sufficient ontological—rather than simply logical or notional—evidence of the sole reality of God. For, again, if the image is in one sense incommensurable with that of which it is an image, in another respect, it is not other than the reality which it transcribes in relative mode.[488]

To 'know oneself' is thus to know what lies in the essence of one's own soul: the uncreated 'spark' or 'ray' or 'face' of Divine consciousness that realizes its plenary nature in the return to its source. To know this—spiritually and not just theoretically—is to know 'one's Lord' for the 'ārif can be said to know through God—through the reflected image of God's Self-knowledge—first, that God alone is absolutely Real, and that he, in the face of this reality, has no real existence, whether in or out of the state of fanā'; secondly, that, insofar as he possesses a degree of existence, it cannot pertain to him as an individual but to God as the unique, inassociable Reality. We thus return to Ibn al-'Arabī's definition of the 'final end and ultimate return' of the 'ārifūn: 'The Real is identical with them, while they do not exist.'

According to Ibn al-'Arabī, there are two crucial existential concomitants of this highest knowledge, and it is with these that this essay will be concluded. On the one hand, there is the perfect realization by the 'ārif of servitude ('ubūdiyya) towards God; and on the other he is witness to a perpetual theophany in the world of phenomena around him.

The reason why the realized 'ārif is also the perfect slave of God is twofold. First, because he knows that he is nothing in the face of the Real: he may thus be said to have assimilated an 'ontological' humility; that is, a humility that transcribes in personal and existential terms the knowledge consummated at the supra-personal degree of pure Being. Henceforth, the soul of the 'ārif is penetrated by humility. Secondly, he is the perfect slave of God because he knows that, as an individual, his immutable attribute is servitude; this, notwithstanding his knowledge of his innermost identity, revealed in all its plenitude in the unitive state. In other words, the passing state of *fanā'* is, from the strictly human point of view, subordinated to the immutable station of *baqā'*, subsistence:

> 'Subsistence is a relationship that does not disappear or change. Its property is immutably fixed in both the Real and the creature. But annihilation is a relationship that disappears. It is an attribute of engendered existence and does not touch upon the Presence of the Real.'[489]

When annihilation is viewed as a particular state, it is situated within the framework of 'engendered existence'; moreover, it is something which is transient within this relative framework. It is in this respect that it 'does not touch upon the Presence of the Real': only that which is immutable can be called real. Thus, it is the permanence of slavehood, rather than the passing state of annihilation, that faithfully reflects, within relativity, the eternity of the Divine Reality, even if the intrinsic content of the state of annihilation directly pertains to the transcendent order. It is in this sense that the 'ārif may be said to 'go beyond' all mystical states, even while assimilating the knowledge of ultimate Reality revealed in these states. We thus return to Abū Madyan's description of the 'advanced' mystic: the one who is master of his states, rather than their slave. It is also worth recalling what was said by Dhū'l-Nūn: the true 'ārif does not stay constantly in the same state, but he stays constantly with his Lord in all his states.

The permanent awareness of Divine Reality in the midst of the normal course of life thus takes precedence over particular, transient states; and hand in hand with this permanent consciousness of the Lord goes an equally permanent awareness of one's servitude to God, a servitude that remains for as long as the individual as such subsists. The slave, in other words, always remains the slave, his existence 'is immutable in its servitude'.[490] Each aspect of existence is put in its right place: the aspect of inmost consciousness of identity with the Real does not contradict the concrete obligations of the slave towards God as his Lord and Creator; and inversely. It might be said, in fact, that reverence and devotion to the Lord are deepened in the measure that knowledge of His sole Reality is attained.

Turning to the second fundamental aspect of the highest knowledge, the witnessing of a perpetual theophany, what must be stressed is that, having realized God in supra-manifest mode, the perfect 'ārif is one who cannot but see Him continuously through and in all the modalities of manifestation; having 'climbed up to the Real' the 'ārif comes to know God in His aspect of transcendence, since 'the Real discloses Himself to him without any substratum'; then knowledge of Divine immanence in the substrata will flow forth as a natural consequence. He who has 'seen' the One above all things will see the same One—*mutatis mutandis*—in all things:

> 'When this servant returns . . . to his own world, the world of substrata, the Real's self-disclosure accompanies him. Hence he does not enter a single presence which possesses a property without seeing that the Real has transmuted Himself in keeping with the property of the presence . . . after this he is never ignorant of Him or veiled from Him . . . '[491]

This witnessing of God in all things is the positive complement, in terms of consciousness, of the essential poverty of the 'ārif in terms of being: although he knows concretely that he is nothing before God, his very consciousness of the reality of God's inescapable presence means that he is also witness to a perpetual theophany:

> 'The Real is perpetually in a state of "union" with engendered existence. Through this he is a god. This is indicated by His words, "He is with you wherever you are"(Qur'ān, 57: 4); and it is the witnessing of this 'withness' that is called 'union' (*waṣl*), insofar as the gnostic has become joined (*ittiṣāl*) to witnessing the actual situation.'[492]

It should be noted here that this mode of union is related to the Divine, not in its Essence, but insofar as It has 'descended' as a 'god' in the forms of His Self-manifestations, that is, the cosmos in its entirety; 'union' upon this plane is thus to be distinguished from the state of union or identity spoken of above, even though it is in the light of the latter—the knowledge through God—that this witnessing of the Divine 'withness' is fully attained. One should recall here the ḥadīth qudsī identifying God with the very faculties of the slave whom He loves: it is, even in respect of relative consciousness on the plane of phenomenal existence, only God who 'sees' God: only the divine 'face' within the human faculties—sensible and intellectual—can grasp the divine 'face' in the created objects and phenomena in the world.

In the chapter of the Fusūs on the prophet Elias, emphasis is put on the 'completeness' of *ma'rifa*; this requires that God be known both above and within all things. Those who 'return' to phenomenal existence with a transformed awareness thereof, are deemed to possess a greater plenitude than those who 'remain' in the state of ecstatic extinction in God.[493] This is the message received by Ibn al-'Arabī from the prophet Aaron in the course of his own spiritual ascent through the heavens: those who remain unaware of the world are said to be 'lacking' in respect of the totality of the Real inasmuch as the world—assimilated as an aspect of this very totality—was veiled from them. This is because the world is 'precisely the Self-manifestation of the Truly Real, for whoever really knows the Truly Real'.[494]

The world, in other words, is not just reduced to the status of illusion before the transcendent reality of God; it is also grasped by the *'ārif bi-'llāh* as the manifestation of God: God's transcendence above all things does not veil the 'ārif from His immanence in all things, and inversely.

* * *

It might be said, in conclusion, that it is the perfect combination of *tanzīh* and *tashbīh* that defines the integral perspective of *ma*'rifa that we have attempted to outline in this essay. For a unilateral stress on tashbīh invariably leads to the error of a horizontal reductionism, objectively, and an accompanying crude form of self-deification, subjectively: on the one hand, God will be identified with the sum total of created things; and, on the other, the mystery of God's presence in the transpersonal depth of consciousness will be appropriated by and appended to the personal ego.

A unilateral stress on *tanzīh*, for its part, entails an implicit polytheism: for if God's Reality is cut off completely from the world, the world must be attributed with an autonomous existence, whence the positing of two realities, and, in the last analysis, two absolutes. God is not only the Sublime (*al*-'Alī), He is also the All-Encompassing (*al-Muḥīṭ*): He infinitely transcends all things, but, at the same time, nothing that exists can be definitively excluded from His unique Reality.

This doctrine is beautifully expressed in the famous poem by Hātif Isfahānī, the *Tarjī*'-Band, at the end of which the mysteries of *ma*'rifa are directly broached:

> 'O Hātif, the meaning of the Gnostics, whom they sometimes call drunk and sometimes sober,
>
> [When they speak] of the Wine, the Cup, the Minstrel, the Cup-bearer, the Magian, the Temple, the Beauty and the Girdle,
>
> Are those hidden secrets which they sometimes declare in cryptic utterance.
>
> If thou shouldst find thy way to their secret thou wilt discover that even this is the secret of those mysteries,
>
> "He is One and there is naught but He: There is no God save him alone!"'[495]

[ke yekī ast-o hīch nīst juz'ū
waḥdahu lā ilāha illā hū]

Chapter Five

A Study of Abuhamid Al-Ghazzali's Life and Epistemology

Michael Mumisa,
CSIC, The University of Birmingham

Abstract

The problem of knowledge has been a pre-occupation of philosophers throughout history. It is, as Ackerman puts it, "one of the most basic problems of philosophy".[496] Questions such as: Is the world as people perceive it the basic reality, or do people perceive only appearances (or phenomena) that conceal basic reality? What a the limits of human knowledge? What are the boundaries between reason a knowledge, on the one hand, and what some thinkers call the illusions deriving from metaphysics? What are the sources of human knowledge, in other words, what constitute human knowledge, are questions which have been the pre-occupation of epistemology from Plato to al-Ghazzali, Kant and beyond. Rationalists (Plato, and Descartes) have argued that ideas of reason intrinsic to the mind are the only source of knowledge. In opposition to this view, empiricists (Locke and Hume) argue that the sense experience is the primary source of our ideas, and hence of knowledge. Existentialism (Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, and Sartre) oppose rationalist and empiricist doctrines that assume that the universe is a determined, ordered system intelligible to the contemplative observer who can discover the natural laws that govern all being and the role of reason as the power guiding human activity. In this paper, I shall trace the evolution of al-Ghazzali's epistemological thought, from its 'infantility' and total subjection to authority (*taqīd*), to his encounter with Empiricism and Neo-Platonism, and later, his final subscription to Sufi dogma. This paper is based on Arabic as well as English sources. Although my primary sources

are al-Ghazzālī's own writings, I have also relied on other sources I felt were relevant to the topic.

Al-Ghazzālī's Life

Muhammad b. Muhammad b. Aḥmad Abū Ḥāmid al-Tusi al-Ghazzālī, commonly known as Algazel in the West was born in 1058 C.E./450 A.H. (three years after the establishment of the Seljuq rule in Baghdad) at Tabaran, one of the towns of Tusi, now in ruins in the neighbourhood of modern Meshed in Khurasan.

Al-Ghazzālī was not the first scholar of distinction in his family, there had been another Abu Hamid al-Ghazzālī (d. 1043/435), his grand-uncle, who was a theologian and jurisconsult of great repute. His own father was a pious dervish who according to al-Subki would not eat anything but what he could earn with his own hands and spent as much time as he could in the company of sages.[497]

Al-Ghazzālī undertook his elementary education in his hometown under he guidance of the Shafi'i scholar Shaikh Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Razkani who taught him the Shafi'i system of jurisprudence. He then moved to Jurjān at the south-east corner of the Caspian Sea where he completed a course under one of Jurjan's most eminent scholars, Imam Abu Nasr al-Isma'ili. After his return from Jurjan he stayed for a while in Tusi and studied under Yusuf al-Nasaj. At the age of about twenty he proceeded to the Nizamiyyah University of Nishapur (about fifty miles from Ṭus) to study under Abu al-Ma'ali al-Juwainī, known as Imam al-Haramain, who was considered the most distinguished Ash'arite theologian of the day, only fourth to Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari himself in the apostolic succession of the Ash'arite scholars. Al-Ghazzālī gave early proof of academic brilliance and also of a tendency towards philosophising and showed a gift for polemics in his debates with other students. At this stage, he had a very critical mind and possessed great independence of thought. It was during his studentship at the Niẓāmiyyah University that he became impatient with dogmatic teaching and freed himself from the bondage of authority (*taqlīd*) and showed signs of scepticism.

During his stay at Nishapur, he became a disciple of Abū al-Faṭl b. Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Farmadhi al-Tusi, a pupil of al-Ghazzālī's uncle and of al-Qushairi (d. 465/1074). Al-Ghazzālī learnt more about the theory and practice of Sufism from al-Farmadhi but could not feel settled in his mind. On the one hand, he felt philosophically dissatisfied with the speculative systems of the scholastic theologians and could not accept anything on authority, while on the other, the Sufistic practices failed to make any definite impression on him for he had not at that time received any definite

results. There is no doubt, however, that the increasing attraction of Sufistic teaching, with its insistence upon inner knowledge, added to al-Ghazzālī's critical dissatisfaction with scholasticism.

Al-Farmadhī died in 477/1084, and Imām al-Ḥaramain in 478/1085. Al-Ghazzālī was then in his twenty-eighth year and his fame had already spread in the Muslim world. He betook himself to the Court of Niẓām al-Mulk, the great vizier of the Seljuk sovereign Malikshah (r. 465/1072-485/1092) and joined his retinue of canonists and theologians. Niẓām al-Mulk was so impressed by al-Ghazzālī that he appointed him to the Chair of Theology in the Niẓāmiyyah University (established 458-60/1065-67) at Baghdad in 484/1091. He was then only thirty-four and this was the most coveted of all the honours in the then Muslim world and one which had not been conferred on anyone at so early an age. For four years he was a popular professor at the University with over three hundred students as an audience. He was at the same time reading philosophy and became a veritable challenge to the philosophies of Aristotle and Plotinus, and to their Muslim representatives before him, al-Fārābi and Ibn Sīna. The main trends of the religious and philosophical thought of al-Ghazzālī, however, became close to the temper of the modern mind. The champions of the modern movement of religious empiricism on the one hand, and that of logical positivism on the other paradoxical though it may seem, would find equal comfort in his works.

Al-Ghazzālī's study of philosophy deeply affected all that he did afterwards, and indeed the whole subsequent course of Islamic theology.[498] His old doubts and scepticism began to assail him once again and he became highly critical of the very subjects he taught. He felt keenly the hollowness of the meticulous spinning of the canon-lawyers. The systems of the scholastic theologians (*Mutakallimīn*) had no intellectual certainty, for they depended entirely on the acceptance of their initial dogmatic assumption on authority. He denounced their over-emphasis on the doctrinal, and argued that it led to a faulty representation of religion by reducing it to a catechism of dogmas. He equated the disputes of the scholastics to Christological debates and considered them as mere dialectical logomachines which had no real relation to religious life. Al-Ghazzālī turned once again to the study of philosophy, this time as diligently and as comprehensively as he could, but found, like Kant, that it was impossible to build theology on reason alone. The Ultimate, the Supreme Truth, could not be reached through it. He became keenly aware of the theological limitation of reason and fell into a state of scepticism and lost peace of mind. He realised that if he could consecrate himself to the Sufistic way of life through spiritual renunciation, sustained asceticism, and prolonged deep meditation, he could receive the light he sought. But this meant giving up his brilliant academic career. It would therefore be very difficult for him to give up his position as professor at Niẓāmiyyah, but

he was an earnest seeker after truth. He remained in the throes of severe moral conflict and in a spiritual travail for about six months beginning in Rajab 488/July 1095 until he collapsed physically and mentally when his appetite and digestion failed and he lost his power of speech. This made it easy to retire from professorship. He then left Baghdad in November 1095/Dhū al-Qa'dah 488, ostensibly on a pilgrimage to Makkah; actually he went into seclusion to practise the ascetic and religious discipline of the Sufis. He gave away all his fortune except some "trust funds" to maintain his family and proceeded to Syria.

Al-Ghazzali's Life in Damascus

The discussion on al-Ghazzālī's stay in Damascus is very problematic, and probably the most difficult area in al-Ghazzālī's biography, despite the large number of existing books written on his life in Arabic as well as European languages. Perhaps the reason for this problem is that many writers tend to repeat al-Ghazzālī's account of his stay in Syria without subjecting his narration to a test of historical research. It is true, as Watt maintains, that the fullness of our knowledge of al-Ghazzālī is due to the fact that he left us an autobiographical work, *al-Munqidh min al-dallāl* (Deliverance from Error),[499] but it must also be cautioned that not being a historian, his treatment of his life in it was schematic rather than chronological, and lacked the methodology of history. Any attempt, therefore, at writing his biography while quoting from *al-Munqidh,* should not go without critical study and historical research. Until Dr Ṭaybawi, former Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of London, wrote his book, *al-Quds al-Sharīf fī tārikh al-'arab wa al-islām,* no attempt had been made to deal with al-Ghazzālī's stay in Damascus.

Al-Ghazzālī writes in his biography that he left Baghdād on a trip to Syria, and that for two years he remained in strict retirement in one of the minarets of the mosque of the Umayyads in Damascus, undergoing the most rigorous ascetic discipline and performing religious exercises. He then moved to Jerusalem for another period of meditation in the mosque of 'Umar and the Dome of the Rock and then went on pilgrimage to Makkah and Madina. This was followed by a long period of retreat in mosques at different places and wandering in deserts. Afterwards he returned to his native town, Ṭūs, to visit his family.[500]

When al-Ghazzālī says that he stayed in Syria for "two years", it is not immediately clear whether this refers to his whole period of stay, before and after his pilgrimage, or not. It becomes more confusing when, while writing about his return from his hometown, he says that he stayed in Syria *after* ten years. Does this refer to his seclusion after his return or to the duration he

stayed in Syria since leaving teaching? Many recounts and reports have been recorded about the period of his stay in Syria, but the problem with these narrations is that they contradict each other. Imām Subkī reports from one of al-Ghazzālī's biographers, Khatīb Naiṣār 'Abd al-Ghāfir al-Fārisī, who claims that he stayed in Syria for approximately ten years.[501] A similar report can be found in *Tārikh al-Dimashq* quoted by Subkī from Ibn 'Asākir.[502] The problem with the two reports, however, is that while the first has been reported from a contemporary of al-Ghazzālī, it has been recorded by an author who lived two centuries after al-Ghazzālī and yet he does not mention his sources or chain of transmission. The second report is from a man who was closer to al-Ghazzālī's era than Subkī but it also contradicts the report by a more reliable contemporary of al-Ghazzālī, that of Abū Bakr b. al-'Arabī, who claim that he met and listened to al-Ghazzālī while he was in Baghdād in the month of *Jumād al-thānī* (490 A.H.).[503] These traditions again contradict Ibn Athīr's report who, when writing of the incidences of the year 488 A.H., claims that it was during this year that al-Ghazzālī went to Syria and wrote his magnum opus the *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*. When we take all these reports into consideration, it follows that al-Ghazzālī left Baghdad for Syria in *Dhūl Qa'dah* (488 A.H.) and returned before the month of *Jumād al-thānī* (490 A.H.). His encounter with the *ḥā*dith scholar, Shaikh al-Fat*ḥ*, therefore, was just for a few months in 489 A.H.

Al-Ghazzālī's Concept of Knowledge

Definition of Knowledge

In a work on Avicennian (Ibn Sīnā) philosophy, knowledge is adjudged incapable of definition, because knowledge "is a condition of the soul which he who is alive finds in his soul at the beginning without any equivocation . . . Knowledge can dispense with a definition, for whoever recognises a thing is able to recognise its being cognisant of that thing without logical proof and speculation. Knowledge that one knows a thing, stands for knowledge of one's essence having the attribute of knowledge. Now, knowledge of the attribution of a complete process (ittiṣāf amr *tāmm*) calls for the knowledge of each of the two things, that is the object (*mawqūf*) and the attribute (*ṣifah*). If the knowledge of the reality of knowledge were acquired, it would be absurd to assume that our knowing a thing could be known without speculation and deductive reasoning. As this is not so, it is established that the knowledge of the reality of knowledge dispenses with acquisition."[504]

In Islamic epistemological thought, however, the term used for knowledge in Arabic is *'ilm*, which as Rosenthal justifiably pointed out, has

a much wider connotation than its synonyms in English and other Western languages. "Knowledge" falls short of expressing all the aspects of *'ilm*. Knowledge in the Western world means information about something divine or corporeal, while *'ilm* is an all-embracing term covering theory, action and education. Rosenthal, highlighting the importance of this term in Muslim civilisation and Islam, writes:

> In fact there is no concept that has been operative as a determinant of the Muslim civilisation in all its aspects to the same extent as *'ilm*. This holds good even for the most powerful among the terms of Muslim religious life such as, for instance, *tawḥīd*, "recognition of the oneness of God", *ad-dīn*, "the true religion", and many others that are used constantly and emphatically. None of them equals *'ilm* in depth of the meaning and wide incidence of use. There is no branch of Muslim intellectual life, of Muslim religious and political life, and of the daily life of the average Muslim that remains untouched by the all-pervasive attitude toward "knowledge" as something of supreme value for Muslim being. *'Ilm* is Islam even if the theologians have been hesitant to accept the technical correctness of this equation. The very fact of their passionate discussion attests to its fundamental importance for Islam.[505]

There exists a difference of opinion among the Arabic lexicographers with regard to the definition of *'ilm*. Knowledge has been defined as cognition (*ma'rifah*) but the majority of Arabic linguists refuse to accept this definition arguing that there exists a vast difference between *ma'rifah* and *'ilm*. To prove their position they argue that, had there been no difference between the two words, it would have then been permissible to describe Allah as *'Ālim* as well as *'Ārif*. Islamic theology, while it allows calling Allah *'Ālim*, prohibits using the attribute 'Ārif for Him. This, they argue, indicates that there is a difference in meaning between the two words.

According to al-*Ḥas*an b. Mu*ḥ*ammad, the famous Arabic lexicographer well-known as al-Rāghib al-Isfahāni, knowledge is the perception of a thing as it is or "of a thing in its reality" (*bi ḥaqiqatihi*). He goes on to explain the difference between *'ilm* and *ma'rifah* saying that *ma'rifah* is the knowledge acquired after a process of thinking (*taffakur*) and pondering (*tadabbur*). It is for this reason, he writes, the Arabs say, "*Allah ya'lamu kadhā*" (Allah knows such and such) and not "*Allah ya'rifu kadhā*" since Allah's knowledge is not acquired through thinking (*tafakkur*) and pondering (*tadabbur*).[506]

In his famous book on legal theory *al-Mustasfā*, al-Ghazzali explains that it may be argued hypothetically that knowledge is cognition (*ma'rifah*)

"because every knowledge is belief, and every belief is cognition. Cognition is a wider term."[507] This conception of knowledge, philosophical in origin, was basically a Mu'tazilite doctrine and was refuted by the orthodox argument that Allah could not be thought of as believing. Al-*Ṣābūni* states flatly that it is an assault upon the concept of Allah's knowledge, since it requires Him to believe.[508] The implications and pitfalls of this concept, "belief", are reviewed in detail from the Mu'tazilite perspective in 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Mughni.*

Al-Ghazzālī and Authority (*Taqlīd*)

The late Dr Windelband, former Professor of Philosophy in the University of Strasbourg, wrote in his book, A History of Philosophy, that the appeal to authority often made its appearance in the Greek and Hellenic Philosophy in the sense of a confirmation and strengthening of an author's own views, but not as a decisive and conclusive argument. The *jurare* in *verba magistri,* he maintains, was usual enough among the subordinate members of the school, but the heads of schools, and in general the men who engaged in independent research, maintained an attitude towards the teachings of the former time that was much more one of criticism than of unconditional subjection; and though in the schools, chiefly the academic and Peripatetic, the inclination to preserve and maintain the teaching of the founder as an unassailable treasure was fostered by the custom of commenting upon his works, yet in all the conflict as to the criteria of truth the principle had never been brought forward that something must be believed because this or that great man said it. Even though admiration of Socrates, in which all the following were at one, did not itself lead to his being regarded as the valid authority for definite philosophical doctrines,[509] the belief in authority in the later period grew out of the felt need of salvation and help. Another psychological root of this belief was the enhanced importance of personality. This shows itself in the great men of the past, as found in Philo and in all lines of Platonism, and not less in the unconditional trust of the disciples in their masters, which, especially in later Neo-Platonism, degenerated to exaggerated veneration of the heads of schools.[510]

The history of authority in Occidental thought is very similar to that in Oriental thought, Muslim thought in particular. Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dehlawi writes in his treatise *al-Inṣāf*:

> Know that the people in the first century (the first generation of Muslims) and the second century were not united upon the following of a single *madhhab* (a school of thought or a person's opinion).[511]

In his *magnum opus*, *Ḥujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, he writes:

> Abū Ṭālib al-Mālikī says in *Qūt al-qulūb*: These books (of *fiqh*) and collections (of *fatwā* or religious rulings) are a novelty and so is to speak according to the *madhhab* of one person, taking his sayings, quoting him in every affair, and to gain knowledge of *fiqh* (jurisprudence) only according to his *madhhab*. This was not the practice of the first and second generations, they were not united upon pure *taqlīd* (blind following) of *madhhabs* and upon learning only one school of thought. Rather, the people were of two levels: the scholars and the common people. The common people used to follow one who had Knowledge of the *sharī'ah* in the matters of agreement about which there is no difference among the Muslims, or among the majority of *mujtahidīn*. They would learn how to perform ablution, prayers and how to discharge their regular charity and so on from their fathers or from their local scholars and act upon it. If anything unusual occurred, they would seek the ruling of any jurist they found without specifying any *madhhab*. Ibn Hammām says at the end of *al-Taḥrīr:* They would at one time ask one *muftī* and then at another time a different one, not sticking to a single jurist.[512]

On pages 154-155, he goes on to quote Ibn Ḥazm's famous ruling:

> Blind following, therefore, is *ḥarām* (unlawful) and it is not permissible to take the saying of anyone without proof except for that of Allah's Messenger, upon whom be peace.[513]

According to Ibn Khaldūn (1332-1407) *taqlīd* or authority in Islam is of a later origin and he writes in his *Prolegomena*:

> When it was feared that (*ijtihād*) would be attributed to those who were not befitting and to those whose opinion was not to be relied upon, they stated that it was something that people were now incapable of. Instead they turned them to blind-following and warned from accepting from more than one *Imām* since that, they argued, would be to make a game of it. So nothing remained except for the *madhhabs* to be passed on and for each blind follower to stick to his own *madhhab*, after its principles had been settled and its ascription affirmed by narration, such that there is no means of attaining *fiqh* today except through their way and any claiming *ijtihād* today has his claim rejected

> and is not followed, and the people of Islam today blindly follow these four *Imāms*.[514]

Al-Ghazzālī's initial knowledge was based on authoritative instruction (*taqlīd*) but later showed signs of scepticism when he could not accept anything on authority. Like many other scholars before and after him, he came to a realisation that *taqlīd* could not be regarded as knowledge, and that this unconditional subjection to the teachings of the *Imams* was, in actual fact, some form of ignorance.[515] In several passages in his *Iḥyā'*, he attacks blind following (*taqlīd*). While explaining the concept of *ijtihād muqārib li-l-yaqīn* he writes:

> Such a state is described as a belief approaching certainty, which is similar to the belief of the common folk in all legal matters (*shar'iyyāt*), i.e. they accept as fact that which is simply hearsay. Thus, every group is certain of the authenticity of its own system (*madhhab*) and the infallibility of its own *Imām*, or leader. Should any one member of these groups be reminded of the possibility that his *Imām* might be mistaken he would resent it very much and refuse to admit it.[516]

On page 94 he further explains the position of classical scholars on *taqlīd*:

> With this in mind Ibn 'Abbās said, "There is no one except the Prophet whose knowledge is not sometimes followed and sometimes rejected." Thus although Ibn 'Abbās had received his knowledge of jurisprudence from Zayd b. *Thā*bit and had studied the Qur'an at the feet of 'Ubay b. Ka'b, he later contradicted both in jurisprudence and Qur'anic readings (*qirā'āt*), respectively. One of the predecessors (*salaf*) said, "Whatever is handed down to us on the authority of the Apostle of Allah we accept willingly, but what we receive on the authority of the Companions we may accept and we may reject. It is, however, a different story when we consider what we receive from the followers (*al-tābi'īn*), *because they were men like ourselves* (*hum rijāl wa naḥnu rijāl*).[517]

In *al-MunqiṮ* he explains how from his youth he strove to have a thorough and genuine understanding of all the *madhhabs* and various Muslim sects with which he encountered. He began to wonder how the beliefs acquired from parents and teachers through *taqlīd* or blind-following could be tested for their truth or whether they could be called knowledge.

The thirst for knowledge was innate in me from an early age: it was like a second nature implanted in me by God . . . No sooner had I emerged from my boyhood than I had already broken the fetters of tradition and authority and freed myself from hereditary beliefs . . . The diversity in beliefs and religions and the variety of doctrines in the sects which divide men are like a vast ocean strewn with shipwrecks . . . Each sect believes itself to be exclusively in possession of truth and of salvation . . . From the period of adolescence I have again and again plunged myself into this vast ocean . . . Struck with the contradictions which I encountered in endeavouring to disentangle the truth and falsity of these opinions, I was led to make the following reflection: The search for truth being the aim which I propose to myself, I ought in the first place to ascertain as to what are the foundations of certitude. I said to myself, I am seeking knowledge of what things really are, so I must know what knowledge is. I saw that certain knowledge must exclude all doubt and the possibility of error, indeed even the supposition of this.[518]

When he proceeded to enquire into the validity of knowledge, he was led to conclude that the only knowledge which tallies with this form is empirical knowledge and the knowledge of self evident propositions:

> When I examined my knowledge, I found that none of it was certain except matters of sense-perception and necessary principles of thought.[519]

When reading this statement, one often wonders if at this stage al-Ghazzālī was sceptical about revelation as a source of knowledge, whether he became so sceptical that he even doubted the metaphysical aspect of *sharī'ah* knowledge in which he had been schooled, since this form of knowledge is not empirical. We have to remember that according to al-Fārābi's view (based on a Qur'anic verse), there is no knowledge in the mind at birth, and we knew nothing when we were born.[520] This influenced al-Ghazzālī here, and then Thomas Aquinas and, through them, later influenced Western realists. Here we would like to compare al-Fārābi, Ghazzālī and Thomas Aquinas for the role of the senses and mind in relation to the source and creation of information.

Empirical and Rational Knowledge

Al-Fārābi

Al-Fārābi's accepts sense as a source of true knowledge. To him, man's first knowledge is perception. Perception comes after sensation. In his work, al-Madīnah al-Fāṭilah, he argues that because of the inherent weakness

of our mental powers we cannot comprehend God completely. According to him, every idea comes from sense-experience: "There is nothing in the intellect that has not first been in the senses." The mind is like a smooth tablet on which nothing is written and it is the senses that do all the writing on it. The senses are five: sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Each of these has a proper sensible thing for its object. In every sensation the sense receives the form or species of sensible things without the matter, just as wax receives the form of a seal without any of the matter of it.[521]

The sensations we have once experienced, he maintains, are not utterly dead. They can reappear in the form of images. The power by which we revive a past sensible experience without the aid of any physical stimulus is called imagination (*al-mutakhayyilah*) while the power by which we combine and divide images is called the cogitative (*al-muffakkarah*). If we were limited merely to the experience of our actual sensations, we would have only the present and with it there would be no intellectual life at all. But fortunately we are endowed with the power of calling back a former experience and this is called memory (*al-ḥāfiẓah* or *al-dhākirah*).[522]

Thomas Aquinas

Thomas of Aquinas, a representative of religious realism, who lived in the 13th century, developed a theory of knowledge parallel with his metaphysical conceptions. We can explain his theory of knowledge by showing that he was influenced by Aristotle and al-Fārābi. God is "Pure Reason", thus the universe is also "Pure reason". It follows that we can understand the truth of objects by using reason, as suggested by Aristotle and al-Fārābi. To obtain information about the external world, however, we have to use our senses.

Even though the truth has been conveyed to humans by revelation from God, He has also provided men with the intellect to seek the truth. Aquinas gives second place to intellect after revelation.[523] He further maintains that sense is a power and is naturally changed by the exterior sensible, wherefore the exterior cause of such change is what is directly perceived by the sense. According to the diversity of that exterior cause the sensitive powers are diversified. Now, change is of two kinds, one natural and the other spiritual. Natural change takes place in the form of the changer being received, according to its natural existence into the thing changed. Whereas spiritual change takes place in the form of the changer being received according to a spiritual mood of existence, into the thing changed, as the form of colour is received into the pupil which does not thereby become coloured. Now, for the operation of senses, a spiritual change is required, whereby an intention of the sensible form is effected in the sensible organ.[524]

For the retention and preservation of these sensible forms, the fantasy or imagination is appointed, which are the same, for fantasy or imagination is as it were the storehouse of forms received through the senses. Furthermore, for the apprehension of intentions which are not received through the senses, the estimative power is appointed; and for the preservation thereof, the memorative power, which is a storehouse of suchlike intentions.[525]

Al-Ghazzālī

Al-Ghazzālī explains how the five sensory organs function and which characteristics of objects they perceive:

> In the creation man was formed empty of knowledge and simple, knowing nothing of God's worlds. His worlds are many . . . Man only comes to know about them through the use of his senses. Each of those senses is created so that man perceives himself and one of those worlds of the universe. By worlds, we mean the different variety of beings.[526]

Foreshadowing Bacon, he claims that knowledge can only be through induction, and uses Qur'anic verses to support his case. Knowledge, he said, cannot be obtained by deduction, only by induction. Thus, discarding the Aristotelian method of deduction, he laid the foundation of modern science that the Western world has seen since the 17th century.

According to al-Ghazzālī, "there can be thought of God's person, but the power and grandeur of the Creator can only be conceived by thinking about the created."[527] Induction knowledge, he claims, comes from the Qur'anic: verse 190 of *Āl 'imrān*, which asks us to study "the creation of the earth and skies, and night and day as they follow one another."

These are particulars and through a study of them the generalisation can be made that God is the Creator of all. Al-Ghazzālī notes in his book, *Iḥyā'*, that each of the senses alone is insufficient; only with the combination of all five organs can a complete sense form in the mind. This complete sense (*al-ḥiss*) forms in the fore of the mind and cannot reach conclusions. Here al-Ghazzālī introduces the intellect. The complete sense uses each of the five as "spies", collects the information brought by them and turns it over to the intellect. In the final analysis, knowledge issues from the intellect, and at this point, just as al-Ghazzālī's thinking differs from Locke[528] with the notion of complete sense, it also diverges from other Muslim thinkers.

Al-Ghazzālī does not stop at placing sensory information at the basis of knowledge, but also accepts experience as one of the sources of knowledge. In other words, there is the natural intellect and there is the

later, accumulated intellect. The accumulated intellect is gained through experience, it is born of experience.[529] We may conclude that al-Ghazzālī, like other realists, sees the role of the mind in the acquisition of knowledge about an object. On the other hand, al-Ghazzālī, though not as much as Locke, tries to prove with Qur'anic verses that observation is another source of knowledge:

> His heart did not deny what he saw.[530]
> As this, we show the secrets of the earth and the skies.[531]
> Eyes cannot be blind, but hearts in the chests are.[532]

Using the above verses, al-Ghazzālī argues that observation is necessary to understand the divine order of the universe; but also says that there are two kinds of eyes: the eye as the organ of vision, and the eye of the heart. Thus, the sense provided by observation is rooted in two separate sources: the eye in the head, and the eye of the heart. The observation of objects is achieved by the eye in the head, then the eye of the heart confirms it. However, all metaphysical issues can be observed and understood only through the eye of the heart.[533] Al-Ghazzālī, therefore, did not doubt the metaphysical aspect of *sharī'ah* knowledge, and as he later discovered, empirical knowledge alone was not reliable. Like Descartes (1596-1650), the French thinker who is generally regarded as the founder of modern philosophy, he denied that the senses alone could be a source of knowledge. The data given by the sense-experience could be contradicted and convicted of falsity in an indisputable manner by the verdict of reason:

> It further occurred to me, however, that my present trust in sense-perception and necessary truths was perhaps no better founded than my previous trust in propositions accepted from parents and teachers. So I earnestly set about making myself doubt sense-perception and necessary truths. With regard to sense-perception I noticed that the sense of sight tells me that the shadow cast by the gnomon of a sundial is motionless; but later observation and reflection shows that it moves, and that it does so not by jerks but by a constant steady motion. This sense also tells me that the sun is the size of a coin, but astronomical evidences prove that it is larger than the earth. Thus sense makes certain judgements, and then reason comes and judges that they are false.[534]

Al-Ghazzālī's faith in sense-perception having been shaken, he turned to the scrutiny of what he called the necessary principles, but doubted these

too. The truth of mathematical axioms and laws of logic, he argued, could not be absolutely guaranteed. His senses had sometimes deceived him, why should not his reason? His doubt with regard to sense-data made him very hesitant to accept the infallibility of reason:

> Perhaps beyond rational apprehension there will be another judge; when he appears he will show that reason is false. The fact that this supra-rational apprehension has not yet appeared, does not mean that it is impossible . . . While asleep you assume your dreams to be indisputably true; but once awake you recognise them for what they really are, baseless chimeras. How then are you sure of the real existence of all that you believe in your waking through sense or reason? In relation to your present state they may appear real but is it not possible that you should enter upon another state which will bear the same relation to your present state as the latter does to your condition when asleep? With awakening into that new state you might recognise that all your rational suppositions are no more than mere chimeras.[535]

Al-Ghazzālī then suggests that this state may be death itself and that this life may be a dream in relation to the life to come. He finally comes to believe that it may be the state which the Sufis call ecstasy, in which they claim, when absorbed in themselves with the sense perception suspended, they see things which are not in accordance with rational principles.[536]

Scepticism

One cannot invalidate the point that al-Ghazzālī's scepticism was preceded by some study of philosophy and that this aspect of his epistemology might have been strongly influenced by Socrates and Plato's method that suggest a sceptical stance. Socrates is said to have claimed that he knew either nothing or very little (e.g. Memo 80.86). In Plato's works this claim is loosely associated with the portrayal of Socrates as practising a procedure of *elenchus*, "scrutiny" (often translated as "refutation").

The first aspect of al-Ghazzālī's epistemology shares important preoccupation with epistemology since Descartes. First, as indicated, al-Ghazzālī is portrayed as finding reason to reject most claims to knowledge. Next, his early investigations are launched from a first-person standpoint: one must ask whether one's own judgements are justified, and try to find justification that will seem compelling to oneself. In this way he adopts a standpoint similar to that of what are now called "internalist" epistemological views. Third, it is often said to be important to make statements on the basis

of only what one believes, and not to rely on hearsay or other's beliefs. In addition, although al-Ghazzālī does not explicitly introduce the notion of "doubt", he emphasises the instability of most beliefs, the fact that they can often be easily dislodged by other kinds of persuasion.

Though al-Ghazzālī was the most eminent among Muslim philosophers to travel the path of scepticism to attain the ultimate truth, there were others, particularly the Mu'tazilites, like Nazzam, al-Jāḥiẓ, Abū Hāshim al-Jubba'i, al-Bāqillāni and others who advocated scepticism in order to arrive at a certain religious faith. Scepticism is a philosophy that has three different meanings: denial of all knowledge, agnosticism and a method to approach certainty. Most Muslim philosophers sought the goal of certainty. Scepticism in the general sense of the impossibility of knowledge is not compatible with Islamic teachings. It is acceptable only when it leads from uncertainty to certainty. The sceptical method has two aspects, rejection of all absolute knowledge and acceptance of the path to overcome uncertainty. Muslim philosophers have followed the second path, because there has been emphasis on rejecting blind faith (*taqlīd*). Shaikh al-Mufīd (an eminent Shī'ite scholar) has maintained that there was a very narrow margin between faith and disbelief insofar as the believer imitated certain theologians. In his view, an imitator (*muqallid*) was on the verge of unbelief (*kufr*). Apart from Shaikh al-Mufīd and other Shī'ite scholars, a number of classical orthodox scholars, and as we have discussed in the previous pages, even those considered to be conservative, regarded emulation or imitation as religiously unauthorised and harmful. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suẓī held *that taqlīd* (authority) was forbidden by both the *salaf* and the *khalaf* (early and later generations of scholars). He cited as evidence al-Shāfi'ī's opposition to *taqlīd*.

Al-Fanā' and al-Kashf (Annihilation and Unveiling)

The literal meaning of the word *kashf* is unveiling, but in Sufi terminology it means to expose the heart to metaphysical illumination or "revelation" unattainable by reason. There is supposed to be yet a higher stage beyond *kashf* which is called *al-tajallī*, or Divine manifestation: the "appearance" of God to man. It is the ultimate end to which the Sufi looks forward. He tolerates *khalwa*, seclusion and succumbs to the will of his Shaikh precisely to become one of the people of *kashf*. *Al-fanā'* or annihilation, in Sufi doctrine, means extinction in the Divine.[537]

Some scholars maintain that the doctrines of *kashf* and *fanā'* originated in Hindu philosophy while others claim that it first appeared in Greek thought. According to Professor Windelband, the development of these doctrines in Hellenistic philosophy took a direction entirely different from that which it took in other thoughts. Here the scientific movement

lacked the living connection with the Church community and therefore the support of a historical authority; here, therefore, revelation (*kashf*), which was demanded as a supplement for the natural faculties of knowledge, was to be sought in an immediate illumination of the individual by the Divine. On this account *al-kashf* was held to be a supra-rational apprehension of divine truth, an apprehension which the individual man comes to possess in immediate contact with the Divine. It was only a few who attained to this position (whom the Sufis will call the *khawwāṣ*). This conception of revelation was later called in the Western literature, the mystic conception, and to this extent some scholars believe that Neo-Platonism is the source of all later mysticism.[538] Sufis, however do not accept that Neo-Platonism is the source of Sufism. For them the Qur'an and the teaching of Prophet Muhammad are the sources of spiritual knowledge and the spiritual grace (*barakah*) flows directly from the Prophet, to whom all the spiritual paths (*silsilah* or *tariqah*) must be linked.

The origins of mystic conception are again to be sought with Plato. He had already taught that all man's virtue can arise and continue only through the working of the divine Logos within us, and that knowledge of God consists only in the renunciation of the self, in giving up individuality, and becoming merged in the divine Primordial Being.[539] Knowledge of the Supreme Being is unity of life with him through immediate contact. In other words, the mind that wishes to behold God must itself become God.[540] In this state the soul's relation is entirely passive and receptive; it has to renounce all self-activity, all its own thought, and all reflection upon itself. Even the reason must be silent in order that the perception of God may come upon man. In this state of ecstasy the divine spirit, according to Plato, dwells in man. Hence in this state, he is a foreteller and miracle worker.[541] Sufi concepts are not quite the same.

Ecstasy, which al-Ghazzālī and other Sufis call *ḥāl*, is a state which transcends all the self-consciousness of the individual, as its object transcends all particular determinateness. It is sinking into the divine experience that is worth an entire loss of self-consciousness. How is this state to be attained? According to Proclus, one has to put off all his sensuous nature and all of one's own will; he has to turn back from the multitude of individual relations to his pure, simple, essential nature; and the ways to this are love, truth and faith; but it is only in the last, which transcends all reason, that the soul is annihilated in God.[542] Thus the theory of inspiration diverged, in Christianity and Neo-Platonism, into two wholly different forms. In the former, divine revelation was fixed as historical authority; in the latter, it was the process in which the individual man, freed from all eternal relations, sank into the divine original Ground. The former was for the Middle Ages the source of Scholasticism; the latter, that of Mysticism.

Sufism consists in love of God and freeing oneself from passions and desires following the sunnah of the Prophet.[543] Al-Ghazzālī did not allow Sufism to descend into a kind of mysticism which does not operate within the framework of *sharī'ah*. In fact, through his scholarly works as well as his own spiritual practice he established *sharī'ah* as the guiding principle of Sufism.

According to al-Ghazzālī, since the human soul is by nature limited solely to the impressions of the senses, it is therefore, of its own power, absolutely incapable of acquiring metaphysical knowledge, knowledge of the Transcendent, life after death or of any vocation or destiny of its own that transcends this life. Just for this reason it needs revelation (*kashf*), and finds its salvation only through faith in this. And, like Tertullian and Arnobius, he asserts that the content of revelation is not only above reason, but also in a certain sense contrary to reason, insofar as by reason man's natural knowing activity is to be understood. A true learned man must devote the greatest part of his attention to esoteric knowledge, the observation (*murāqabah*) of the heart, the path of the hereafter and how to journey thereon, as well as to an abiding faith in finding that path through self mortification (*mujāhadah*) and observation. For self-mortification leads to contemplation (*mushāhadah*), and through the intricate details of the sciences of the heart fountains of wisdom will gush forth. Books and formal education, he writes, are of little help because the wisdom which passes all understanding is only achieved through self-mortification, observation and watching, coming before God in solitude and bringing the heart before His presence through pure reflection and sole devotion to him. This the key to illumination (*ilhām*) and the foundation of revelation (*kashf*). On page 97 of *Iḥyā'* he writes:

> Those whose hearts have been sanctified have the secret of heaven made known to them either by inspiration which dawns upon them from where they know not, or by actual vision *al-ru'yah al-ṣādiqah* (in their sleep), or in their wakefulness, which unfolds to them the mysteries through the contemplation of types, just as in sleep. This is the highest rank, and is one of the high ranks of prophecy.[544]

There are two points against the Sufi interpretation of *Kashf* and *tajallī*. First, conceiving metaphysics by illumination is impossible. The fact is that whatever exists can be conceived only within the realm of reason. Once man loses reason, he loses ability to conceive of anything of its reality, and turns to hallucination. Secondly, any claim that the Divine essence can appear, whether in existence or beyond it, whether materially or transcendentally,

is a flagrant lie according to orthodoxy. 'Abdul-Karīm al-Jilī the closest associate of Ibn 'Arabī and influenced by the doctrine of illumination, went on to claim that he was commanded by God to bring his own book, *The Perfect Man*, to the people, the theme of which is similar to pantheism. He claimed that the perfect man could represent all the attributes of God, and further asserted that the Prophet was the perfect man. On this premise, he went on to declare, "to me belong sovereignty in both worlds,"[545] a claim that is far worse even than associating partner with God (*shirk*).

Conclusion

Exercise of the intellect (*'aql*) is of significance in the entire Islamic literature which played an important role in the development of all kinds of knowledge, scientific or otherwise, in the Muslim world. In his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam,* Iqbal pointed out that *ijtihåd* was a dynamic principle in the body of Islam. He claims that much before Francis Bacon, the principles of scientific induction were emphasised by the Qur'ån, which highlights the importance of observation and experimentation in arriving at certain conclusions. It may also be pointed out that Muslim jurists and exegetes made use of the method of linguistic analysis in interpreting the Qur'anic injunctions and the Prophetic tradition. Al—Ghazzālī was probably the first Muslim philosopher to make use of the linguistic analytical method to clarify certain philosophical issues. There are those who feel that he was more maligned than properly understood by both the orthodox and liberal Muslim interpreters of his philosophy. His method of doubt paved the way, however, for intellectual activities in the Muslim world, but because of historical and social circumstances, it culminated in the stagnation of philosophical and scientific thinking, which later made him a target of criticism by philosophers. One of the problems inherent in his thought was his belief that some types of knowledge were harmful to human beings. Islam actually does not consider any type of knowledge as harmful. However, what in the Qur'anic has been called useless or harmful consists of pseudo sciences or the lore prevalent in the pre-Islamic period. Islam never maintained that only theology was useful and that empirical sciences were useless or harmful. This concept was made common by the semi-literate clerics or by the time servers among them who wanted to keep common Muslims in blind faith so that they would not be able to oppose unjust rulers and resist clerics attached to the courts of tyrants. This attitude resulted in the condemnation of certain sciences which led to the decline of Muslims in politics, economics and technology. It gave birth to movements which considered elementary books of theology as sufficient for a Muslim, and discouraged the assimilation or dissemination

of empirical knowledge as leading to the weakening of faith. It is my belief, however, that conflict between faith and science only arises when science has been transformed into a religion; in other words, when it has acquired the status of a sort of positivistic religion, or at least, philosophy, of its own, and has transgressed the true form and definition of modern science. I do know, however, that what is known today as modern science, and because of its close association with Western thought since the Enlightenment, is a science armed with, or immersed in, a completely materialistic world-view. This science has allowed itself to transgress its legitimate boundaries, and whereas it was originally meant to be applied solely to the material world, it has given itself the authority to pass judgement on every conceivable subject. And since it is unable to ascertain either truth or the falsehood of propositions concerning matters within the extrasensory or supernatural realm, it denies the very existence of such worlds. I wish to re-emphasise that the blame for this opposition to, or better to say, denial of the existence of, a world inaccessible to the human sense organs lays far more upon the shoulders of materialistic scientists than upon those of experimental science *per se.* Undoubtedly, the science practised by such persons, burdened by a particular set of intellectual shortcomings and prejudices, would be entirely antithetical to belief in the existence of a spiritual world and a supernatural divine entity; an entity which, obviously, cannot be subjected to ordinary scientific investigation.

Ibn Arabi's Psychology in the *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom*: A Commentary

Laith Sabah Al-Saud,
Purdue University, USA

Abstract

Sheik Ibn Arabi is well known for spending his entire life perfecting and elaborating upon his *experience* of God. At a young age he had a magnificent experience of the union of being and tailored his philosophy to express the power of that moment to his fellow Muslims, and man in general with a magnanimous amount of work. The *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom* is such a work, where Ibn Arabi provides an account of the Soul's relation to God and man and the spiritual peace it harnesses. Conveying his theme in a shroud of symbolic language and in the form of a decorative analogy I have attempted to comment upon this work (trans. By Sheik Tousan al-Halveti) in terms of its metaphysics, ontology (briefly), and practical psychology.

Sheik Ibn Arabi's *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom* is one of the relatively unknown, or at the very least, relatively unstudied works of the twelfth century philosopher. Perhaps this is due to its lack of maturation as a *metaphysical* work, the *Divine Governance* does not articulate as well the famous micro/macrocosm relationship that Ibn Arabi spent his life investigating and articulating, as some of his other works. The *Divine Governance* is unique, however, in that it has a very practical purpose. Namely, to provide a comprehensive account of the *psychological* processes of man, the components involved, and inclination and reality of those components. It is important to note that the *Divine Governance* takes the form of a decorative analogy, paralleling the psychological process of man with the social process of a city or state. And finally as the head of that state, Ibn Arabi elects the soul as the only qualified entity worthy of

governing human will and action. We will, hopefully, elaborate on how and why this premise, of the soul being the governing entity, is the foundation for Ibn Arabi's normative psychology. Also, we will try to touch upon any moral or ethical implications of such an assertion, and the metaphysical designation it lays upon the soul as a *real* source of morality.

I. The Psychology of Man

The Soul as the 'Deputy' of God:

Ibn Arabi, although recognizing the unity of man, divides man into several components. These components include the mind harboring the intellect and *concept* of the self, and the heart, which harbors the soul. How these components facilitate the function of the soul and self as identities to the body will be discussed later. Ibn Arabi, however, is precise in his election of the soul as the governing deputy of the individual. For Ibn Arabi, the recognition of the soul as the governing feature of man is not one of intellectual preference, such as Plato's selection of reason as the governing feature of man. Rather, it is based on an understanding of the God-world relation, or more accurately the Creator-created relationship. The soul is the extension of the eternal God, and as such, it itself is eternal. This gives the soul the status of a permanent reality, rather than the contingent reality of the material world, which is the basis of its supremacy to the other features of man.

> As man is created central to the universe and is the microcosm to the macrocosm, the soul is central to the human being and is the deputy of the Lord. To protect ourselves from the criticism and the assault of those who look upon life and the world only from the outside and who are blind to their outer and inner selves, we must explain what we mean.[546]

Ibn Arabi goes on to provide a metaphysical explanation of the soul quoting Sheik Al-Ghazali who said on the subject:

> The deputy which God sent as the master of all things is the soul, and the soul is not created, it is directly from the realm of God's command. [547]

The soul is a divine (and eternal) entity and therefore, functions in a very different way then the contingent realities of the material world. Almost

immediately we come across our first description of the nature of man, and specifically the soul of man. Similar to the philosophical inclinations of the mystics preceding Ibn Arabi, the eternity of the soul posed problems for the orthodoxy, however, the eternity of the soul is not meant to equate the soul with God. It is, rather, a perpetual act of God manifesting His creation as *His* act (of which we will say more about later). The soul is the *center* of human experience, as man is of the created order, or the cosmos. But why does the soul, or man, deserve such a designation? Ibn Arabi's designation of the soul as the center of man is clearly not a physical assertion; however, it is not only an epistemological claim as well. We must refer to the role or relationship of the microcosm to the macrocosm as seen by Ibn Arabi. The Universe is the *macrocosm* of the created order, meaning that it exists as the full manifestation of creation. It harbors the attributes, which accompany an entity created by God, which is existence and relation to the pure and real light that is God. Man is the *microcosm* to the Universe, in that he is a pivot point in the decree of the Universe. Without man the potential of the Universe becomes unrealized, its moral and aesthetic worth unfulfilled; with man, the Universe becomes a *Divine* occurrence, a source and inspiration of life and an arena where man may enjoy its meaning and value.[548] The soul, of course, is the microcosm to man. The soul is the "meaning" of the body as Ibn Arabi will describe it later. Just as the value and potential of the universe is unrealized in the absence of man, the value and potential of man is unrealized in the absence of the soul. The soul is the vehicle of human potentiality, giving man the opportunity to embrace and actualize the essence of eternity (and be carried off by eternity). The fulfillment of the soul has the priority of being valued as an eternal essence of the human being. The various other components of the human being are accidents of existence; they are merely relative to the existence of the human being as a temporal being. The soul, however, is the essence of the human being and in its self-fulfillment man embraces, identifies, and is carried on by a permanent entity rather than the temporary entities such as the senses and ego (which is the totality of the *physical* components of identity) that man normally identifies with.

As we have seen, Sheik Ibn Arabi describes man as the microcosm to the macrocosm, drawing parallels to their features as created entities. They are material in existence, designated as existing by their material presence, however they are eternal in essence, for permeating their existence, is an unchanging permanent reality which maintains the consistency of their existence as the same entity. It is important to note that the soul does not provide the individual with an identity in itself. It is the totality of the created order, which provides for the conception of the self. In light of the Creator, man is created, in light of the eternal, man is temporal, and in light of the

material, man has a soul that reflects the juxtaposition, which provides man with an identity. And, man is created *central* to the universe. Man, in experiencing his essence reflects the attributes of eternity. The attributes, although eternal, become manifest in the temporal created order. The nature of man is to identify those attributes, within the soul and the attributes *as essence* become realized for the whole-created order. At that moment of realization, the individual and the cosmic (microcosm and macrocosm), actualize the created order as the self-disclosure of the Absolute.[549] For Ibn Arabi, this is the foundation of the individual's relationship with the Absolute as the true and ultimate Reality. Ibn Arabi's exposition of man's psychology and his more general ontology does not follow a linear path of disclosure, the Sheikh *begins* his work with the most comprehensive and encompassing assertion, that of the Soul-God relation. The soul is not a *created* entity, in that it is not related to the created order as the body is to clay. The soul *transcends* the material world; it is of the divine realm. Perhaps, an analogy would be of some use, if we have a lifeless piece of rubber and we blow air into it, it becomes a balloon. The air we breathe into it is not of it, rather it is of our own volition, however, that air (an extension of ourselves) gives the balloon life. The Universe, as a material entity, exists unrealized lacking compassion, imagination, reason, admiration and love. The soul is the breath of God, giving life to lifeless clay, and in fact, a lifeless universe. For Ibn Arabi, therefore, God is the only source of life, and is then the only source of knowledge. The soul is a fountain of that ultimate source, reflecting and participating in the process of life giving. The soul then becomes the 'deputy' of God for it is an eternal and perfect entity, which implies its intrinsic knowledge, its peaceful and harmonious relationship with *the* Reality, and its position at the center of the created order acting as the "mirror" of Reality.

The benefits of electing the deputy of God as the governing component of man is that the soul exists in itself and does not pursue temporary satisfactions as does components of the material world. For man to be governed by features of the material world such, as the body (being only concerned with satisfying physical appetites such as hunger, thirst, desires, etc.) is to commit a fallacy of existence. It is to assert the primacy of a contingent feature of the identity of the individual over the permanent and therefore real self, the soul. The body seeks to fulfill appetites that place it in constant contention with the intellect, which acts as the witness to the soul and body. And the intellect seeks satisfactions that place it at odds with the soul, depending on an individual's choice (will the intellect identify with the soul or ego). For the former two are rooted in the material world and therefore only find satisfaction in a temporal existence while the soul is essence in itself and is thereby never in pursuit but simply fulfills

its own existence. The material features, then if allowed to govern the self, are themselves governed by their appetites and hence an insufficient feature to govern the individual. The soul does not share the blemish of pursuits and therein lays its perfection. As a perfect entity the soul is the same in essence, although not equal, as the Absolute, as an eternal being existing as essence rather than existing as a material presence. The soul's status as eternal does not belie its contingency upon God's command. The soul as a breath and reflection of the Divine essence is not contingent upon man as a being creating the soul. The soul, however, is contingent upon God's command to create and provide the possibility of the soul to be reflected upon and experienced as the "soul." The soul becomes the "soul," in Ibn Arabi's sense, when man realizes it and God. Ibn Arabi explains the Creator-created relationship as one of authority and potential, the former of course being God and the latter man. Ibn Arabi quotes Sura *al-Taha* from the Qur'an: "God, most gracious, is firmly established on the Throne (of authority.)" He then provides an account of this verse in its application of the Creator-created relationship.

> There is a hidden meaning to this verse, to be told to the ones who follow this path so that they taste the sweet taste of the inner meaning which Sufism seeks. The word "Throne" is balanced by the word "grace," and there is a level of perfect balance of God's attribute and the place of the source of power. The Throne is the place where the soul of man resides. The only way in which God's magnificence can be realized is by ascending to that place. The Throne is the vicinity of the Names "God" and "The All-Gracious." [550]

The "Throne" as so eloquently used by the Qur'an, and cited by Ibn Arabi is the essence of the Absolute in its relation to the created as the Creator. The existence of God is "firmly established" upon the "Throne" of his authority which are His attributes and the attributes are His essence. It is the attributes of the Creator, furthermore the eternity of those attributes, which signify His authority as the Creator and authority over the created order. Ibn Arabi's psychology is constantly echoed by his ontology, in which the two are so intertwined (which is typical in Islam) it is impossible to discuss one without the other. The soul's essence is vested in the "Throne" of authority, which are the attributes and essence of God. Ibn Arabi declares the individual must ascend to the Throne in order to realize the magnificence of God. It would seem that in the context of the discussion, Ibn Arabi is seeking the intellect to ascend to the place of the Throne, via the soul. By way of reflection, the intellect attaches itself to the soul in conception of

reality and the human being begins to see and live in the world as it *really* is rather than in a state of egotistical seclusion. If the intellect occupies itself with considering features of the material or physical identity as sources of knowledge then it becomes attached to a singular temporal phenomenon, rather than the eternal unity of the realm of the soul. It is clear that Ibn Arabi considers the soul as the righteous teacher of the individual based on God's authority and the soul's relation to God. God is independent of the material world; His essence is independent of the accidents of existence, as is the soul.[551] In its eternal nature it is perfect and unblemished by the pursuits, as has been discussed, of the contingent phenomenon of the material world. Its essence, therefore, is of more value upon reflection by the individual for it is free in the ultimate sense, while the features of the material world are of relatively less value due to their temporality. Quite simply, the soul is the governing component of man for it is the 'deputy of God' in essence. Meaning its existence is always in harmony with eternal Reality and as such it brings the individual peace in the created order; for the individual then transcends the temporality of that order.

The Structure of Man's Psychology

Ibn Arabi provides a comprehensive explanation of the interaction of the various components of human cognition. He designates the cognitive process and the individual in general, as a "city." As the heading of Chapter Three of the *Divine Governance*, indicates: "The Structure of the City of Man Whose King is the Soul, the Deputy of God."; the Sheik's explanation continues the general sentiment that the soul is the governing component of the individual. In this chapter he expounds upon concepts such as the "Mind," as to what he means by this term, how it is related to the other components involved, and the purpose of those components. He also provides an explanation of how intellect (reasoning) and the ego, along with the soul, facilitate the manifestation of the "self" as a recognizable identity (and one often in conflict with itself).

> The Lord built the city [man] on a foundation of four walls made of earth, water, air and fire. Some say that the place of the Lord's deputy is not the heart but the mind. I insist that it is the heart, although no one has evidence or proof. But for establishing stability and for heedfulness and remembrance, the heart is surely the center. [552]

It is important to note, that by the heart Ibn Arabi is not referring to the anatomical heart (Ibn Arabi uses the term "vegetal"), rather, he is referring

to it as a residence; harboring intuition beyond the intellect and rationale. For Ibn Arabi it is irrelevant how this relationship takes place, between the soul and heart, it is only relevant that the source of knowledge is rooted in intention and intuition rather than pure reasoning.[553] The Sheik then draws parallels between the rule of a society by a just or unjust ruler and the rule of the individual by a just or unjust soul. Just as a society ruled by a corrupt leader will itself become corrupt, an individual ruled by a corrupt soul will in turn become corupt. If the soul "betrays the trust" laid upon it, it dislodges itself from its eternal source. The temporal features of man, therefore, run wild having no connection to the eternal Reality. Ibn Arabi, however, does not dismiss the importance of the Mind, in fact he declares the Mind crucial in aligning the individual with the soul.

> One sees so many things in oneself, without knowing why they are, whether they were there in the beginning or happened afterwards or will be the same tomorrow-for one does not know the procedures of the secret government within, or how to protect that little piece of meat, the heart, whose disorder can destroy us all. The Lord created a tower on the higher levels of the city of man. He built it with refined materials and set it to overlook the whole city, and called it Mind. He opened four large windows on top of it, for the enjoyment of the four corners of the city, and called them Eyes, Ears, Mouth and Nose.[554]

He identifies the Mind with the senses, and in general as the apparatus that conceives of the created order. Ibn Arabi, then places at the center of the Mind the intellect, allowing the senses and conception of the Mind to refer to the intellect (or reasoning) to understand the world. Between the senses and intellect a relationship of interaction takes place, the senses gather information of the created order and the intellect investigates and tries to understand it; in turn, providing the senses with an ability to function in the world.

Finally we arrive at the notion of personality, which Ibn Arabi interestingly refers to as the "daughter of the deputy of God"; he identifies this personality as *self-hood.* He qualifies this characterization of the self by quoting Sheik Al-Ghazali who said on the subject: "The human being is that child whose father is the soul and whose mother is the self." So it seems that Al-Ghazali attributes an equal status to the Soul and self as facilitating the individual with an identity, while Ibn Arabi places the soul on a higher level and in fact declares it the progenitor of the self. It is unclear whether Ibn Arabi, means the personality and the self are one and the same, or that

the personality is a component of the self. This distinction is of the utmost importance for Ibn Arabi attributes determinism to the self and freedom to the soul. Is the self the embodiment of the contingent features of man such as the senses, intellect (both harbored by the mind), and the personality, thereby assigning it to the physical world and cause and effect? It is not clear, no such reference is made to *physical* cause and effect, but it is quite clear that all predestination is the will of God. Ibn Arabi's justification of the freedom of the soul is left unsaid, but if similar to Al-Ghazali's, it is due to its transcendence of the material order and physical cause and effect (rather the soul is of the *Divine* realm).

It is the two main components of the identity, namely self and soul, which are the causes of conflict for the individual. When Ibn Arabi uses the term 'self' he does not use it in the general sense as comprising of *all* the features resting under the umbrella of an individual's identity. Rather, he designates the self as more consistent with the ego, meaning a peculiar and unique feature of the identity, which is contingent to the temporal existence of an individual. It is the momentary manifestation of a *concept* of individuality based on one's circumstances; such as physical appearance, occupation, wealth, position in society, privilege of birth, etc. The ego seeks to preserve that identity and therefore, the self is a contingent entity which is inclined to fulfill momentary satisfactions which always detract from the ultimate good, the individual's relationship with the eternal God. The self is then inclined to do *evil,* which is any act of forgetting God, and its own connection to God. The soul is not such a feature, in that it is not peculiar and unique in the sense of being contingent upon the identities of individuals', rather, the soul is consistent with the essence of the ultimate unchanging reality. The soul of course, as has been discussed, is only inclined to fulfill itself as an eternal entity, an extension of the Absolute. Ibn Arabi, however, does not dismiss the self. As typical for a Muslim, he embraces contingent reality as prepared and designed by the Perfect God. He quotes the Qur'an as stating quite simply: "All things are from God". [555](*Nisa'*, 78) [556] There is a purpose and a function of the self contributing to the order of creation, rather than detracting from it in the ultimate sense.[557]

> Selfhood is a place of order and enlightenment, but it is also inclined toward the Evil Commanding Self. If it is tempted, then it loses its purity. All things are from God-it is He who made the Commanding Self desirous of evil, and it is he who made human selfhood bent from time to time to evil as well as good. When the self is rationale and heedful, it is pure and in order. Then it is called the Self-Assured Self. That is the

> lawful state. Although God has created his deputy with the most perfect attributes, He saw that, on his own, he was nonetheless weak, powerless, and in need. God wanted his deputy to realize that he would only find strength in the help and support of his Lord. He created a strong opposition for him to provoke this realization. That is the secret of the two possibilities of human selfhood. [558]

Here perhaps Ibn Arabi captures the distinction between the "personality" and the "self" as was discussed previously. "Selfhood" is central to the identity of the individual; it is the "place" where the direction of the individual is pushed forth. If selfhood recognizes and allows the soul to be the governing component it will be elevated into a higher status of knowledge and reality; but if selfhood as a *reality* attaches itself to the personality it becomes only a momentary manifestation of the *concept* of individuality. Selfhood in this context is not individuality, rather it is the potentiality of the realization of the Creator-created relationship, where the human *becomes* a created individual and the Universe is transfixed as the disclosure of the Absolute. A psychological process must occur in order to facilitate this realization. The self, possessing its intellectual capabilities is aware of its situation, the conflict of its various components and its own mortality. The self is the intellectual force which "provokes" rationale reflection and refuge into the soul. It realizes the soul is the eternal essence of the *individual*, and is then the only unchanging reality of the *true* self. It is not subject to the temporal constraints of the other features of the self.

> It is only pain and trouble that make one realize the value of peace and safety. [559]

Through the confusion and eventual dissatisfaction caused by pursuit of the material world, man seeks to quench the thirst of attempting to pin down an identity. He does so by eliminating that which he has attached to his identity by coincidence, his wealth, name, fame, etc. When the individual has stripped away the accidental features of his identity the soul is what remains and if the famous occasion could ever be expressed as occurring at a specific time it would be this one. This is the moment of *realization* and *union* with the Absolute, a flash of true knowledge. It is this moment that Ibn Arabi spent his life disclosing, yet, for many (perhaps even for Ibn Arabi himself) one is uncomfortable in attempting to express and locate this moment.[560] And that is certainly not the purpose of the *Divine Governance*, which attempts to provide guidance and a rationale discourse to encourage

one to have *faith* in that moment. This faith brings about the unity of the bond between soul and God.[561]

The Causes of Conflict between Intellect and Ego

Ibn Arabi begins Chapter Four of the *Divine Governance*, addressing the issue, and consequently, spiritual awakening caused by the conflict of intellect and self. This conflict captures the alarm of all the components of human cognition, facilitating an intense self-analysis, to relieve the suffering it creates. This personal reflection serves as the catalyst to spiritual reformation and submission to the Divine law, which is revealed as a refuge for peace of mind and a personal destiny, amidst the confusion and anguish caused by spiritual (and intellectual) bankruptcy.

> O' reader, may God lead you to recognize that falsehood becomes evident only when the mind and the ego start fighting, for when they attack each other the whole human realm is caught in the crossfire. So every member is rudely awakened and becomes aware of the conflict-that one or the other is striving to get hold, by force, of the whole of the human kingdom.[562]

Conflict between various aspects of human thought and will causes frustration on the part of the individual. The individual is subject to the desire and concerns of pursuing certain actions rather than others. For Ibn Arabi, these concerns are natural and fundamental to the human experience. It is the result of struggling with human mortality, personal and physical desires (rooting us into a physical existence), and an attempt to cultivate immortality, or at least a compatibility with eternity. The "ego" is the contingent identity, self-designated according to the physical body and personality. The personality is itself rooted in a contingent existence, relative to time and place with a certain value placed on the *individuality* of that identity.

The soul, on the other hand, enjoys an eternal and perfect state. It is an extension of God, and as such it is a component of the individual's identity, but the individual is not a part of the identity (if we may use the term) of the soul. The soul's assignment to the individual, as a contingent reality, is a temporary assignment. Ibn Arabi describes the soul as the "meaning of the body." [563] The soul corresponds with the "truth" of our existence; it is the *life* of our bodies just as our breath is the life of the balloon. The physical existence corresponds with the "facts" about our existence, the features

of existence that we may measure and calculate according to our physical understanding of existence. The "facts" of existence are entirely relative to man's definitions of such and such, and man's acceptable standards for knowledge. The "truth", however, is above and beyond any definitions or boundaries that man manufactures. The soul is the "meaning of the body," providing the body with its purpose, an experience of the Truth and the body provides the soul a contingent *individuality*.

This state of conflict, between satisfying momentary desires and aligning oneself with the eternal order sharpens the awareness of the intellect in assessing what is of value in human existence. It thereby suggests which path to take and what force to follow in relieving the conflict. Ibn Arabi is confident that upon reflection the intelligent individual realizes that multiple authorities will lead to disruption and emotional chaos. For the reasons discussed earlier, the intelligent individual elects the soul as the governing deputy. The Divine Law corresponds with the nature of the soul and *vice-a-versa*, for they are both *eternal* in essence.

> The reason for the revelation of the Divine Law is to eliminate disorder and to establish harmony . . . it is known that the Lord wanted to delegate the government of the human kingdom to one single entity. The example of it has been given in the person of our Master [Nebi Muhammad], may God's peace and blessing be upon him, who also declared: "If, in a single nation, men swear allegiance to two rulers, eliminate one of them." [564]

In the tension between the intellect (as a witness to the supremacy of the soul) and the ego (as the "evil-commanding" self), doubt, suspicion, and misunderstanding cause the individual to be unable to distinguish the right path from the wrong path. Ibn Arabi compares the crisis of leadership as a spiritual condition; to the crisis of leadership as a social one. Once again, drawing parallels between the individual and society, just as between man and universe. And what follows is the unfolding of Ibn Arabi's theory of leadership spiritually in strongly analogous references to civil leadership.

> Everything depends upon the conditions in which you find yourself. They are like the conditions which decide who is going to lead the congregational prayer: Whoever best fills these conditions becomes the imam. Thus one of the two contenders who have claims to rule must adapt

> successfully to the existing conditions. The one who is unable to do so must be eliminated by the order of God. [365]

In order for the individual to live in a healthy spiritual state, which strongly corresponds with one's mental state they must eliminate the ego as a persuasive factor in the direction of one's life. Ibn Arabi will continue the *Divine Governance* elaborating upon the shape that the soul's leadership over the individual will take. He provides a comprehensive metaphor of social leadership, the spiritual and political functions of the imam, and the prophecy of Nebi Muhammad (pbuh) as an accurate account and measure of the leadership of the soul. He defines what is a good and just leader or imam and complements that definition by drawing examples from the life of Nebi Muhammad.

For Ibn Arabi, civil leadership, the place of the imam, and the mission of Nebi Muhammad comprise just positions in the social order. When a society enjoys just leadership or a community a wise imam, they enjoy a communal disposition to goodness and justice. Of course, these communal attributes are culminated in the prophecy and life of Nebi Muhammad and are consistent features of the society he cultivated and the religious culture that followed. Ibn Arabi articulates that a prudent community would hope for the leadership of a just leader or imam who followed the example of Nebi Muhammad. The most interesting feature of this analogy is a theory of the prophecy of Nebi Muhammad is revealed reflecting the relationship of the soul with knowledge.

The context by which the prophet-hood and life of Nebi Muhammad (pbuh), is looked upon by Ibn Arabi is not one of chronological finality of revelatory scripture, a conclusion to the sequence of prophets beginning with Adam, and ending with Jesus, preceding Nebi Muhammad. Rather, the prophet-hood and life of Nebi Muhammad is seen as encompassing and professing the totality of divine truth as embodied by the particular figures of human history, which have been deemed as Prophets. Since the mission of Nebi Muhammad transcends the chronology of divinely revealed truth, his message and example have become a complete and accessible feature of human existence and ethics to be acted upon. It is no longer the case where man must await an intervention (in the way of prophetic missions), of sorts, to be configured into the future and destiny of society. The message of the eternal order now resides as a permanent and permeating staple of the social order. As such, the totality of social and spiritual ethics (Islam) is available to leaders and the common man as a guideline and measuring principle of a self-correcting society. Therefore, the leadership of a society must reflect this new status, of being self-correcting, by electing or selecting

leaders, which fit the model set for leadership by the social ethic(s) (of Islam).[566] Nebi Muhammad's social and spiritual liberation of his particular people in his particular time is not limited to his particular people in his particular time. It is an expression and affirmation of the Eternal truth, and is, therefore, a message not only for a particular people, but indeed all of mankind, and even the whole created order. Ibn Arabi, draws a parallel between the Prophet's, relationship with the created order and the soul's relationship to man. Just as Nebi Muhammad, reflects the truth for the *whole* created order, the soul reflects the truth for the *whole* individual and the individual's position in the Universe.[567] It is not the case that the soul fulfills some sort of component of the individual. The soul is *central* to the individual and is the "meaning of the body" just as the eternal order is the "meaning" of the created order, giving the whole universe a condition of spirituality.

When we examine the soul in this context we find it to be a perpetual source of the Divine order. The citing of Nebi Muhammad as a reflection of the Divine order also facilitates the grander scheme of coordinating the soul with selfhood as a conscious and fully recognizable affair. In order for the insight of the soul to be differentiated from the ego and acted upon as valid transmission of knowledge, the soul is complemented by religion.

II. Insight: Taught and Preserved by Religion.

Religion the Voice of the Soul

Ibn Arabi begins Chapter Five by declaring that one of the "four pillars of Islam" is the station of the imam as a religious figure and civil leader.[568] He characterizes the imam's position as unique in the community and in relationship to God. He re-emphasizes the point that the station the imam enjoys is one of *absolute* authority (in the context of Islam) and that it must be so in order for there to be efficiency in rule. If leadership arises in opposition to the legitimate leadership involved, such leadership should be suspect and rejected. Of course such opposition contributes to war, chaos, and the overthrow of order. Al-Ghazali took an *explicitly* political viewpoint on this matter along the same lines. He rejected rebellion and optioned for patience under persecution to avoid putting the state into civil war.[569]

For Ibn Arabi, in regards to the individual, the soul must be in absolute command. The method by which that authority is preserved is by religion.

> If the kingdom of your being is to be ruled well, then protect your religion; be sure to be in its service. Don't oppose it. If you

> do, you will be opposed. Keep in sight the divine commands, whether you know them all or not. His commands are the gift of your Lord to humankind. [570]

The process of protecting your religion involves protecting the dignity of the self as a created being, possessing reasonable ways of conducting your behavior. Ibn Arabi instructs man to hold his temper, respect the old and love the young, and appreciate the generous.[571]

> No age is better than another: to be old, famous, or honored are not spiritual levels in themselves. Every age and station has its value, and the young, the humble, may be more worthy of respect. What is important are deeds. To appreciate the good deeds of others may lead one to do the same.[572]

In the conduct of behavior one must consider the end of an action, if it is good, then act upon it, if not then refrain. That is the basis of dignified behavior, to recognize there are good and bad, and that is the mandate of religion to illuminate the right and prohibit the wrong. So by the study of religion one may realize one's own dignity in the place of the universe. When one realizes this dignity, which is found only in the soul, one refrains from the company of those who follow the ego rather than the soul. This is the basis of truly Islamic leadership to be a model of mankind and to inspire in others to search themselves for the abilities they possess to act in the same dignified manner. When opposition to such leadership exists it is caused by the imprudent pursuit of satisfactions that are unsanctioned components of society or the individual.

The individual must "attach" him or herself to the eternal by disregarding the appetites of the flesh as *ends-in-themselves*. The potential of selfhood is driven by the ability of the individual to *will* the course of his or her life in accordance with the soul or the flesh. Since selfhood is the summation of the components by which the individual identifies the self, it is not disregarded by the soul, rather, it is fulfilled as a real everlasting entity. Ibn Arabi leaves the power of the Will as a component in itself unjustified, whether it is an attribute of the soul, mind, or ego is unclear. But to coerce the flesh to embrace the soul is to secure it an eternal abode, to do otherwise is to rot the soul and decline it as a source of the identity of the self (which of course is to extinguish the "light" of the self). Ibn Arabi explains this state of affairs as being a "servant" of the world.[573] As a responsible enlightened individual, aware of this state of affairs, one has the responsibility to evoke others by example to tread the same path. One-self need not articulate the

path, it has been provided by religion, however, the success and prudence of this path can only be manifested by living examples.

But you who are master of them all, you have to care for those left in your trust. You must love and yearn for the things among them that you wish to have. You must consider, as you consider yourself, the ones under you. You must know their ranks and their states and their needs, in accordance with which you must bestow upon them what they need. But you must also prevent them from the sin of passing their boundaries.

> You must teach them to obey the One who created them as well as their sustenance, and to abide within the limits which are traced by them. You must instill in them both the love and the fear of their Lord. You must teach them to teach those who come after them.[574]

Of course, in order for this responsibility to be fulfilled one must be aware of his or her own human condition. Ibn Arabi describes the "faithless one" [the one which deviates from the created order] as the ego. And interestingly Ibn Arabi draws a compelling parallel of the tyranny of leadership with the tyranny of the ego. He describes the tyranny of political leadership to be only a temporary obstacle that can result in reward if one perseveres under its suffering. However, the tyranny of the ego is absolute and does harm to the entire realm of the human being. Causing not only momentary despair, in fact it may cause momentary satisfaction, but an eternal defeat by extinguishing the essence of the human being.[575] Ibn Arabi then determines that the one who has defeated the ignorance of the ego and dissolved the ego into the knowledge of the soul, the soul leads the individual to love, freedom, and ultimate selfhood.

The *Divine Governance* goes on to cover a variety of mystical issues; including Gnostic practices, the hidden angelic realm, and character assessments based on physical appearance. The former focusing on whirling dervishes and the material world's influence on the ego; while the latter is an odd (by contemporary standards) exposition and analysis of the physical attributes of an individual and the character traits they reflect. Such an analysis has no real Islamic basis but does resemble certain Kabbalist trends approximating the same time period. Our issue, however, of central importance to the purpose of the *Divine Governance* is the relation of the soul to the body and how this facilitates a cognitive awareness of the soul as a source of knowledge. Furthermore, how and why does the soul have knowledge of reality?

The Soul and the "Inner Eye"

Firstly, the insight, described by Ibn Arabi as being taught by religion, once again refers to his epistemology. For Ibn Arabi, all true knowledge is derived from the soul and the intellect serves as a "scribe" to facilitate the reiteration of such knowledge. Such knowledge is taught by religion and confirmed by the Soul possessing the capability of understanding it and the world.

> May God open the eye of your heart, shedding His divine light: The angelic realm which contains the future potential of creation, incorporeal existences, the meaning of all and everything to come, and divine power, is the element from which the material world is created and, therefore, the material world is under the influence and domination of the angelic realm. The movement, the sound, the voice, the ability to speak, to eat and to drink is not from the existences themselves in this visible, material world. They will pass through the invisible world of the angelic realm.[576]

Ibn Arabi describes conceptual reality as the "veils" of the truth, something similar to Kant's *noumenal* realm some five centuries later, where there is an ultimate reality residing behind the temporal reality of the created world. The senses, however, may only conceive of the veil of reality; the ultimate reality is not accessible to the senses. The force of nature, that which drives nature, cannot be deduced by reasoning, comparisons, contrasts, or associations.[577] Such things find knowledge in the veil of reality. The soul, however, is the mirror of truth, for it is of the ultimate reality itself. This is the crux of Ibn Arabi's epistemology; the soul reflects truth when it is reflected upon by the intellect. It becomes the "inner eye" of the human being, transcending temporal phenomena and disclosing the meaning and force of nature. The veils to this disclosure involve man's mistaking temporal phenomena as *truth-in-itself*, or *reality-in-itself*. This ignorance is exacerbated by mistaking certain aspects of the identity as the *self-in-itself*, such as the ego or body.

Such determined calculations of behavior to arrive at such a spiritual state is uncommon amongst most men, therefore, religion serves the purpose of revealing the ultimate reality as *real* and identify the material world as reflecting, but not containing total knowledge. Ibn Arabi then announces the missions of the prophets. When knowledge of the ultimate reality is penetrated or delivered to certain unique individuals, such as the prophets, the force of the ultimate reality is revealed. It is not necessary for the

prophets to divulge the ultimate nature of reality; rather it is for them to guide man to call upon the Ultimate reality rather than the temporal reality of the material world. Ibn Arabi considers it a mercy that the knowledge of the infinite is beyond the capability of the finite minds of human beings.[578] However, when man recognizes that there lies beyond his or her senses the "truth," he or she will begin to become more aware of the material world as it really is. They then become more aware of themselves, as they really are, and the soul is discovered as the element and force of their *own* experience and reality. For Ibn Arabi, religion is the light by which man sees the truth reflected by the soul, the "mirror" of reality. The Holy Qur'an is a component of reality in the same manner the soul is for man; it reflects divine truth and acts as the deputy of God. In the Qur'an's words and voice reality is revealed, just as in the intuition of the soul, reality does the same.

Regarding the soul's relationship to the body, Ibn Arabi maintains the soul is the "meaning" of the body and central to the individual in the context of the general micro/macrocosm relationship. In Chapter Two of the text he covers some of the common theories of the soul held by Islamic scholars.[579] Ibn Arabi, though, does not take a position on how the soul and body function together; he is only willing to claim that the soul does not occupy a "place" and announces the legitimacy of the Soul-Body relationship. In concluding this Chapter Ibn Arabi celebrates the wondrous relationship of Soul and God, and wishes us all the same.

> When the Lord created the human soul as his deputy, He made it His mirror within which He saw all that he had created, and all His own Names and attributes. Humanity is the proof of God's existence and a guide to lead the creation to Him. He sent man into the universe as His deputy in order to make the created know the Creator. He gave him his trust and the light to enlighten others. He gave him all that and more, not to support tyranny but so mankind might rule in justice, and made him responsible for all that might happen in the whole of creation. If we accept this, all that we have said is in concordance with the religious canons and scriptures. All existence is His, and so is all that happens, for He is the Creator. May God make you successful in your search. He is the one who guides one to truth, for He is the truth.[580]

The Presence of Worship in Ibn Arabi's Ontology and Theology

Laith Sabah Al-Saud,
Purdue University, USA

Abstract

Amidst the wide ranging spectrum of Ibn Arabi's work, including his ontology and theology, the common theme of worship emerges, suggesting its important role in his delineation of the Muslim's religious experience. When the breath of Ibn Arabi's work is appreciated with the hope of glimpsing a systematic theme, we find worship to be the essential motive of the constant and dynamic manifestation of the cosmos, as well as the growth and perfection of man.

All those even remotely familiar with the vast corpus of Ibn Arabi's work are well aware of the difficulty in systematizing his philosophy. Yet scholars have continually tried to do so, perhaps less out of disregard for the nature of Ibn Arabi's work, than as an attempt to make applicable and accessible his philosophy. Nowhere is this trend more evident than in the realm of *ibada'* or Islamic worship, where the entire concept of worship serves as a means of spiritual and intellectual realization and attainment of knowledge. Worship serves as a fundamental tenant in Islam, as it does of course elsewhere; however, for Ibn Arabi worship unveils reality as the object of Islam, its purpose and mission. Philosophy, and I think it is fair to describe Ibn Arabi as a philosopher (amongst many things: mystic, theologian, and jurist), has as its object of intention *reality*; and as such is always concerned with the state of epistemological endeavors and their capacity to reveal truth. Ibn Arabi is no different in this regard and epistemology was one of his chief concerns; however, his masterful synthesis of Islamic theology (as well as practice) and *ma'rifa* has left a most indelible mark on Muslim and non-Muslim thinkers search for certainty and truth. Ibn

Arabi's newly appreciated status amongst the world's great thinkers, both in the East and West, is in large part due to the failure of Western philosophy to defeat skepticism and provide a viable philosophy by which man may relate to one another, and ultimately, the cosmos. *Within* the context of Ibn Arabi's work, the spirituality he is appreciated for is related to providing an unswerving foundation of Islamic theology, inducing a genuine Islamic state of knowledge.

The World and Withdrawal

Perhaps the only statement we could make regarding Sheik Al-Arabi's cosmology emphatically and with little risk of offending his intentions or misinterpreting his work is the centrality of the oneness of Being (and even that "oneness" would be difficult to capture). How man comprehends this unity, especially confronted with apparent multiplicity, is the driving force of Ibn Arabi's remarks and observations. Pluralistic or even dualistic concepts (Creator-created or infinite-finite) are illusions of the limited comprehension of man. However, such an impression about Reality is hardly a fault or even arbitrary, but rather a necessary feature of the world. That is, the illusion of plurality is imposed by the imagination, not as deceitful, but rather as a functioning feature of Being. Man's faculty of imagination serves as the foundation for imposing and achieving *meaning* in the world. Between the world of the unseen and the world of the visible, the void of comprehension and understanding is filled by *imagination*, thereby, bridging the intellectual gap between man's similarity with ultimate Reality and his incomparability with Reality.[581]

The outcome of imagination or meaning, more often than not, is the transfixation of the Absolute into a theologically accorded image or concept that corresponds with a particular conception of the Divine. It is often this conception of the Divine that acts as the "object" of worship. This "binding" of God, however, into a socio-historical object of belief, or rather a "fixed image" of theology, delimits the Absolute and contextualizes His Essence.[582] Such a transfixation furthermore sets boundaries on the possibility of human knowledge. It is these boundaries and limitations that are the cause of theological incoherence, philosophical shortcomings and personal estrangement. The root and foundation of human knowledge for Ibn Arabi is the heart, not as a physical entity or even metaphorical term designating emotion, but as the essential center of the human being, capturing and reflecting the ineffable reality of mystical Union and perpetual creation, often referred to as love.[583] Designating the heart as the root of human knowledge is important for it asserts that Reality cannot be captured and distinguished by the mind alone. When the Real is fixed into a particular

image, the source of true knowledge is abandoned for the intellect, which comments and justifies such imagery in the form of scholastic theology. Certain events and places in history then occupy a central place in the believers' world-view as *in themselves* sacred, once again delimiting the Absolute and erecting a barrier between man and God which serves as some mythical veil of understanding. This contextualization acts as an obstacle to ultimate Union, although sufficient as a momentary indication of where the mind should "focus," they do not in themselves posses the ultimate spiritual fulfillment. In Islam there exists no theological context by which to associate or orientate oneself to God. That is man's relationship with the cosmos and his Creator, is immediate and unmediated, direct and intimate, it is *not* facilitated by certain historical events, birth rites, or covenants. Ibn Arabi's posture towards the scholarship of Islamic theology, during his time (and it can be assumed probably even today), was that scholars of Islam have adulterated Islamic *aqidah*' by attempting to construction Islamic theology akin to other theologies, centered on the isolation of a specific, historically particular discourse. The tenants of Islam for the Sheik, accordingly, actually *abolish* such theology rather than construct, preserve or defend it and this is most evidently manifested in the Islamic concept of worship.[584]

The aim of scholastic theology has always been to intellectually infer the relationship of man and God amid historical events and the texts that bare witness to them; constructing a meditative hierarchy in which man orientates his focus, gratitude, and understanding of the God-world relation through the prism of such events and these events, subsequently, manifest the God-world relation in a temporal fashion.[585] It is the evolution of a philosophy of history that "religion" takes its guidance and meaning; that is by interpreting history and trying to make sense with how and why such things happen, we can understand how God is trying to relate to man. To "know" God through history, however, requires the intellect and Ibn Arabi seeks to move beyond intellect to Being, beyond words or effable scholasticism. For Ibn Arabi knowing God through history is certainly not outright dismissible; however, it cannot serve as the *definitive* basis of human knowledge or the path of the God-world relation. Historical events are locked into a particular moment and cannot reflect the *perpetual* dynamics of the God-world relation; only worship in all its forms can. Ibn Arabi seeks an authentic Abrahamic state of submission and a return to the primordial and direct nature of the God-world relation. He believes this is the call of the Islamic tenants of belief, namely to move beyond history, spatial-temporal relations, and contexts into a pure and *sustained* state of submission (or realization).

If we consider traditional theology as the dialectical navigation through beliefs, history, and logic such an endeavor is predisposed to erecting

distinctions in Being, distinguishing the Infinite from the finite, the subject from object, etc., such distinctions aid the imagination in ascertaining meaning in the world.[586] As such, the *distinctive* accounts of being act as the intention of all awareness, thereby buttressing the distinctive, apparently multiple and disunited character of the cosmos. For example, in attributing exclusive transcendence to the Absolute and dismissing His Imminence, one delimits God's Essence and furthermore His relation to creation which is constant, intimate and all-embracive. Yet just as man is predisposed to erect such epistemological distinctions he also imposes theological distinctions such as conceiving of God as the "Father" or a party to covenants suggesting that *only these particular* manifestations of God are viable and valid. Transfixing God into these particular images locks the concomitant theologies into static and self-contained approaches to knowledge. Such notions obstruct divine union for they suggest a certain posture to the world and require an *abandonment* of the world to achieve felicity and true knowledge. Why? Because such historical events are not perpetual; they seem to have fallen upon earth as a momentary miracle to remind man of God and then vanish into the sky. It is at this moment that theology commences for it is the aim of theology to capture and report such events and relate them to man. Since such an endeavor is *intellectual*, rather than *intuitive*; that is to say that the intellect grasps upon such objects of intention (historical accounts or figures) and deifies them, the subject-object distinction between man and God is maintained, God is "up-there" while man remains "down-here," estranged from the cosmos. When a dichotomy of subject-object exists, the individuality and *exclusivity of individuality* is maintained.

Categorization and distinction are not desultory; rather they aim to assist man in his pursuit of a relationship with reality, a noble aim undertaken by theology. It occurs as a normal act of our cognitive process, pinching the Absolute down with the forefinger of thought to the thumb of history. In the context of these distinctions man, more often then not, abandons the world to seek companionship with the Real. This context, however, is very *theological* for it asserts there a certain or particular relation to the Absolute and such a relation could not be conceived (in the form of theology), let alone understood, unless something of the Absolute was understood. Yet, permeating all such theological discourse is the instinctive reaction to rebel against such categorization and move beyond such distinction in the form of asceticism or abandonment. Ibn Arabi's theological and philosophical project deconstructs this usual theological discourse, and the friction produced, to provide a comprehensive account of reality that alleviates the estrangement eventually caused by theological and epistemological distinction.

Worship in its common practice is a ritual of recognition of some sort or another; it is an exercise of orientating one's consciousness towards something beyond oneself. The question we are dealing with here is how the Sheik provides a way of relating to the Absolute by worship, without being debilitated by the common distortions of Reality that man is so accustomed to, and yet, instinctively rebels against. It seems almost necessary that, at least on the linguistic and metaphorical level, man must impose such categories on the world in order to understand it.

In the *Meccan Revelations* chapter "On Withdrawal" Ibn Arabi discusses the common interpretation of prayer and general ascetic practice.[587]

> Know that for the Tribe "withdrawal" is to choose the retreat and turn away (*i'rad*) from everything that distracts from God. But for us withdrawal takes place in relation to acquired existence (*al-wujud al-mustafad*), since the creed (*al-itiqad*) holds this to be so; and in reality (*fi nafs al-amr*) there is none but True Being (*al-Wujud al-Haqq*). (*Al-Futuhat Al-Makkiya*, pgs. 157-161)

That which has "acquired existence" is the created order. To "withdraw," for Ibn Arabi, in contrast to common practice, is to abandon the common *conception* of the world as that which is detached from the Absolute and *re-conceive* the world as a manifestation of the Real. The Sheik describes the created order in these terms: "That which is described as having acquired existence remains with its root (*'ala aslih*) . . ."[588] That is the created order is a blossoming of Divine manifestation or the Divine root. As such it is of a higher order than that of descent or a fall from particular state of grace or felicity, it is rather the constant realization and manifestation of the Divine attributes.

This conception of the world, inherent to Islam, ignited a revolution in science in philosophy throughout the high period of Islamic civilization. Iqbal noted that the Qur'an's constant encouragement to investigate the world and the universe facilitated a cultural foment in the sciences and philosophy in Islamic history.[589] This philosophical frame of mind can be traced back in intellectual history from Ibn Khaldun to Ibn Rushd to Al-Kindi, to name only a few. In this regard it is commonly misunderstood that the development of Islamic philosophy and science was or even is a struggle between the "rational" and "mystical" tendencies in Islam. This perverted understanding stems from a misunderstanding of the Islamic worldview, which Ibn Arabi (and many other Muslim thinkers) spent centuries delineating. The so-called mystical and rational are complementary aspects to the cognitive process and both are at home in their approach to the world for the world is both inherently rational while an expression, or revelation, of God. It is

more appropriate to suggest that the development of Islamic philosophy and science, in seeking indulgence in the highest degree of Reality, is a "mystical" event that possesses "rationality" as one of its major tools. The pursuit of knowledge in Islamic civilization always sought to complement the world by searching for God's command of it. Ibn Arabi observes, however, the "rational" is too often employed in the act of prayer, when it may only serve as an indication of prayer, which we will discuss shortly.

The comprehensive nature of the Islamic "theological" discourse identifies all phenomena as *the* Divinely projected. This world-view allows for perpetuation (*baqa'*) or the constant realization (*ihsan*) of God in all phenomena presented to the individual. Observable in many cultures, and in the ideas that fashion them, is the divide of philosophy and science, on the one hand, and religion and asceticism on the other. In Islam *all* efforts in attaining knowledge of the truth are acts of worship as we have mentioned and, therefore the dichotomy of philosophy and science verses religion and worship ring false, rather they mutually reflect the same phenomena in different ways. Of course, the Prophetic traditions testifying to this character of Islam are many; for example "He who leaves his home in search of knowledge is on the path of God until he returns," is one of the most well known. Meaning he or she who goes out and engages *with the world* is on the path to the Absolute. Ibn Arabi, by elaborating extensively on this notion, provides a basis in which exercises of knowledge are acts of worship and *vice-a-versa.* The Sheik's indelible influence in delineating the substance and systematics of Islamic worship has permeated the roots of such exercises. When we appreciate Ibn Arabi's metaphysical observations in this context and its relation to Islamic *aqidah'* it is of prime importance. *Tawhid* signifies not only oneness of Being, for Ibn Arabi this is an essential but also rudimentary understating, but a monopoly on Sovereignty by the Absolute Reality, Allah. The God-world relation is not one of distinction in which all components enjoy an element of sovereignty, a temporal possession of existence and power regardless of how remote. It is, rather, the ultimate manifestation of God as Creator and Self-Creating, One and Dynamic. Worship according to the Sheik is man's participation in this perpetual creation, in the ever-evolving manifestation of God's attributes.

Immediately, however, we face a metaphysical and theological problem, if the created order is a manifestation of the Real, how can it be ignorant of the Real? Why does man at times, in fact, many times in history show no relation to God? What does Ibn Arabi's metaphysics have to say about freedom and choice, judgments and accountability? And finally, why do we need Islam? Ibn Arabi's understanding of the cosmos is hardly systematic, but based on a fresh and dynamic understanding of Islamic *aqidah.'* The created order is a mirror of the Divine and as any reflection it is temporal; the

image manifests itself in the projection of the Real and only in the moment of that projection or reflection. A reflection does not sustain itself in the absence of the reality it reflects. At each encounter this dynamic ushers a new consciousnesses and awareness of creativity, identity, and unity. It is also this dynamic, however, that facilitates the appropriate *knowledge* for human attainment. At each moment of true worship, when the individual reflects upon his or her individuality as the loci or reflection of the Divine attributes they usher in a new consciousness for "the self" as well. The human engagement with Reality or Being nourishes a more perfect and higher order of Being in the individual as later Illuminationists will maintain (under the heavy influence of Ibn Arabi).

Knowledge for the Sheik is intuitive but not exclusive; the Ultimate Reality, the projecting force of all existence (as well as existents) penetrates each heart. Misconceptions and intellectual obscurity, however, cement notions that serve not only as obstacles to spiritual attainment, but as formulas for incoherence. The most common presence of this incoherence is in the expounding of scholastic theology. Accorded to this great science is a particular methodology that employs a certain conceptual framework to function. Many of the imaginative distinctions mentioned earlier, Infinite and finite or Creator and created for example, are inherited from this great tradition, for such categorization is *necessary* for it's functioning. For Ibn Arabi, we cannot understand God, the Qur'an or Prophetic tradition, the "Object" and corpus of Islamic knowledge, *through* scholastic theology. Rather, initially, such things must be approached individually and intuitively if the individual is to understand revelation in the appropriate context.

Theology and Sovereignty:

The Authority of the Names of God and the Lack of Self

In Ibn Arabi's treatise *The One Alone*, the Sheik evokes several Prophetic traditions regarding man's approach to the world; Nebi Muhammad's (pbuh) oft-cited utterances regarding the value of knowledge in Islam. "Oh Lord! Show me the reality of things!" And "he who knows himself knows his Lord." Ibn Arabi offers a nuanced commentary on these well-known traditions explicating their intentions. According to Ibn 'Arabi, it is the misunderstanding of these traditions and others like them that have attenuated the true power of worship.[590]

Within the context we have been describing, the initial obstacles to realization are identified, the most common and misunderstood being the *self*. The self is the most critical and essential component of worship in ritual,

pilgrimage, and accountability. It is the concept of the self which gives rise to a *relationship* between the Creator and *created*, the entire function, seemingly, of worship. In this small treatise, however, Ibn Arabi explains that it is the concept of the self that most commonly obstructs union with the Absolute.

Within Sufi circles, and larger mystic circles, the tendency of worship is to dissolve the self into union with the Divine; the self is portrayed as a desirous beast preoccupied with, firstly, its own survival and, secondly, its own pleasure and power. As such it does not possess the disposition to harmonize with the Absolute or fellow mankind. According to our thinker, however, the self is not such a beast for the self *does not exist*; rather it is a manifestation or mode of *the* Existence or *the* Being, Allah.[591] Ibn Arabi describes as follows:

> If you know yourself as nothing, then truly you know your Lord. You cannot know your self by making your self nothing. Many a wise man claims that in order to know one's lord one must denude oneself of the sign's of one's existence, efface one's identity, finally rid oneself of one's self. This is a mistake. How could a thing that does not exist try to get rid of its existence . . . How could a thing that is not, become nothing . . . Therefore, if you know yourself *without being*, *not* trying to become nothing, you will know your Lord. If you think that to know Allah depends on ridding yourself of yourself, than you are guilty of attributing partners to Him-the only unforgivable sin-because you are claiming that there is *another existence* beside Him, the *All*-Existent [italics added]: that there is a *you* and He. (The One Alone 234-5)

Exhausting ascetic acts on the elimination of the "self," one's heart and mind are orientated *away* from realization and engaged in *pre-occupation and alienation*. The cognitive and emotional fixation on the self as the intention of our actions consequently makes it the *object* of our devotion. According to Ibn Arabi this understanding of worship is based on paradigms derived from the language most often employed by theology. For the Sheik, however, there can be no fruitful understanding of Islam, its depth, and even theology in the absence of the intuitive knowledge that *allows* us to understand the Qur'an or Prophetic traditions. Clearly, the *intention* (*ni'aa*) of worship is devotion to the Absolute; therefore the intuitive and logical step is to invoke God, as not the *Object*, but the *mode* of awareness.

The understanding of God in Islam is comprehensive, Allah is the Eternal, Absolute, the First and Last, the only True Power and Sustainer. Ibn Arabi's fashioning of a genuine Islamic act of worship does not begin with illumination interestingly but rather, with analysis.

The attributes of the Absolute are *exclusive* in their reality, created entities are not in possession of being, but rather are *modes* of existence that have "acquired" their status through the manifestation of God's attributes. As such, to acknowledge individuated existents are to acknowledge particular manifestations of the Real. To attribute power or being to such entities (and in fact the entire created order), however, is to once again transfix the Divine into a particular image, namely as He whose Will is *not* such entities. The danger in this understanding of the cosmos is that the attribution of power and being to individuated existents is to suspend the ever-changing order of reality and advent a static image of the God-world relation. Our knowledge of the Divine must be ever-evolving if it is to be truly worship and love of the Absolute. Otherwise our devotion is to transfixations, which more often than not, are the content of scholastic contexts; setting boundaries on human knowledge and restraining man's potential. Rather, man must understand his relation to God as one of peace, love, and graciousness; and as in the most common occurrences of such sensations they cannot be manifested in the *absence* of the being of our devotion. Peace and love are the concomitant of an *engagement* with our devotion (even at a distance); intellectual and scholastic abstraction, however, fail in fluttering the wings of human essentiality, which is to be engaged with Reality, rather then the intellectual obstacles of the "self," such as the abstracting of God from the individual existence. This most common practice, as mentioned, simply supports the subject-object juxtaposition.

As we mentioned earlier, our primitive understanding of the order of "acquired existence" is facilitated by the imagination and necessary. It is necessary, initially, for us to categorize the world into entities and distinct realities *in order to know their true reality* and *in order to be aware of knowledge*. Man's cognitive scheme is primarily (as in *a priori*) concerned with the *relation of things*.[592] It is the consistent feature of the observable world that observations can be recorded, inventoried and assessed by which we may have some knowledge of the world. In the West it was at this point that philosophy ceased for, according to Kant, we *cannot* know that which is beyond our observation. It is in the attainment of the knowledge of this sort, of the "thing-in-itself," as perhaps Kant would have called it; or canonically put and known in the Islamic tradition as Nebi Muhammad's (pbuh) wonder of the "reality of things" that the function of worship in Ibn Arabi's thought must be understood.

It is not necessary to solve the metaphysical issues regarding causality, elaborated most powerfully in the fundamental debate carried on by Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd, in order to appreciate the psychological nature of man regarding knowledge. The observation of causality gives rise to the ambition and hope of knowledge meted out in the consistent and predictable

relationship between objects in the world. As the rational faculty matures, however, the *physical* system that has been developed is insufficient and requires a *metaphysical* solution in order to give it coherence, utility and true dependability. Beyond this Aristotelian path, however, is the greater and innate insurgency to answer integral and common questions permeating the feelings, intuition, and sense of mankind, man is *driven* to knowledge, for all such reasons. In this context the order of "acquired existents" is not detrimental, in the sense of obscuring the nature of reality as Divine Unity and imposing multiplicity, but rather this order is *fundamental* for it accentuates the nature of reality as knowable, accessible and *present* (thereby encouraging man to try to *know* it).

Ibn Arabi provides a rarely investigated suggestion in regard to the history of epistemology in this setting however. The attribution of value and order to the created cosmos intuitively by man *suggests a relation* to eternal and absolute value.

Without delineating the history of human consciousness, the act of worship is buttressed by the context of Islam. The God-world relation has been an involved one, demonstrated in the knowledge of the Absolute through history and in the presence of prophets, revelation, and realization. It is as a student that the worshipper approaches the Divine, in an effort to attain knowledge of the true reality of things, including, perhaps most importantly, "the self." Ibn Arabi commenting on a Prophetic tradition regarding knowing thyself is to one know one's Lord, explains his contention. Thus,

> He (Nebi Muhammad) did not mean by "self" one's ego-that self which favors the pleasures of the flesh and its lowly desires and which tries to command all of one; nor did he mean the self that first deceives—making one believe that the dirt and the ugliness is proper, than flagellates itself for the wrong it has done and forgets and does it again; nor did he mean the self-satisfied self. He meant one's *truth*, one's *reality* (parenthesis and italics added). (The One Alone 238)

Worship is first and foremost an act of knowing the "self" placing it in the proscribed context and understanding its *true* relation to the Absolute. That relation is not one of subject-object or of intellectual deduction or juxtaposition. It is, rather, a realization of the *quality* of the universe as a perpetual manifestation of the Absolute. This realization can begin nowhere other than in the most intimate and direct loci of manifestation that is, nominally, the "self." The philosopher, of course, may object due to the invitation of some metaphysical issues, which seemed to be dogmatically huffed over. Ibn Arabi, however, does not suggest this path of realization in

spite of metaphysical dilemmas, but rather, to suggest a radically different metaphysical, philosophical and theological paradigm. Namely, that the unity of Being does not permit the categorical use of terminology and conceptual distinctions that constantly act to pluralize it.

We must remember that the Sheik's philosophical outlook is one primarily concerned with understanding Islam *genuinely* and living up to its spiritual standards. How genuine Ibn Arabi's vision is a matter of discussion, however, the sincerity of his endeavor is blatant (the simple quantity of his work should suffice as testimony). Man as a vessel of Being must engage with the world *differently* and participate in its creation as fully as the nature of our being permits. Worship is an act of creativity and love. The nature of submission usually attributed to worship is the submission of participation and realization. The individual who insists on his distinctive being *alienates* himself from the whole of creation; furthermore, he marginalizes creation, isolating it into a tractable conceptual framework, which is alien to its nature. Beyond a spiritual dilemma, rather such alienation is an ethical dilemma, castrating the constant grace of creativity that *is* creation. To worship in Islam is to be constantly aware of God and devote *each* act to that awareness; thereby any dealing with any part of creation is governed by the elevated consciousness of *taqwa*. It is in a state of *taqwa* that a Muslim approaches all social relations, the cosmos and even the Qur'an.[593]

In Ibn Arabi's thought *taqwa* is beyond a state of mind, but is a state of reality, permeating all aspects and features of creation. Creation is in constant worship in its activity and as such it should not be dismissed nor treated with indifference, but rather with all the deference believers treat the most common mosque or the holiest of places. To withdraw from the world, therefore, is antithetical to worship and antagonistic to knowledge.

Prayer and Participation

Now that the cognitive aspects of theology have been exposed, what is the function of prayer in light of this more appropriate understanding of the cosmos? As we have mentioned, Ibn Arabi embellishes reality as nothing less then the reflection of the Absolute and it is in this capacity that prayer finds its place. In the realm of "pure" philosophy or abstract thought, as also understood in science, the mind *follows* the order of reality assessing and understanding its physical and rational workings. In prayer, as well put by Iqbal, "it [the mind] gives up its career as a seeker of slow-footed universality and rises higher to capture Reality itself with a view to become a conscious participator in its life."[594] This is why the Islamic project cannot be complete with pure rationalism alone but requires so-called "mysticism" for its completion.

Within the context of Islamic theology a comprehensive idea of God persists, most elaborately and beautifully embodied in the Divine Names or Attributes. Perhaps however, influenced by the platonic discourse, Islamic philosophy took a wrong turn in inquiring about the essence of God (which is unknowable in Islam) through the Divine Names. That is by undertaking the investigation of the "essences" of these attributes the "essence" of God may be better understood. This, of course, led to much controversy regarding the singularity of God and the "simplicity" (as proposed by the Mutazalia') of His essence, for example. Ibn Arabi proposes a solution, the Names are not distinct realitites (or forms or essences) in themselves, but rather they signify the *relation* of the Absolute and manifested, or the Eternal and temporal.[595]

The dynamics of this relation is ineffable, however, it is constantly perfect in the act of prayer. In prayer the temporal *reflects* and realizes *its* essence as a manifestation of the Divine. A new consciousness emerges, in which the created becomes more real, fulfilled and perfect, a Sadrian notion indeed.

Islam's endeavor is an immersion of the "self" into harmony with the world in an achievement of peace, knowledge, and fulfillment. That is-man's place in the world is *natural*, and indeed fulfilling, and that the act of creation is a perpetual act of God. The suggestion of any epistemological dichotomy, such as the ones mentioned above, are that creation is complete and man's nature (including his knowledge) is final, thereby providing man no encouragement to grow. The Islamic call to submit oneself to God, according to Ibn Arabi, is the unique act of simultaneous worship and acknowledgment, thereby proposing a primordial and comprehensive theology that encourages realization of the *perpetually* created nature of the world. That is the world is not *complete* but is constantly being created as a reflection of the will of the Real. This dynamism causes man to concede sovereignty to the Creator and appreciate creation as a constantly new and vibrant expression of the Real. As an expression, as a perpetual act, the created is never separate from the Creator as a statue being currently molded is still an extension of the artist. Creation is an extension of the Absolute. One realizes the overall unity and divine status of creation, including one's individuality. When such a realization occurs an elaborate metaphysical system emerges along with an ethical substructure related to Being, in which all things are *related* in a unified act of creation. This is one of Ibn Arabi's truly unique contributions to thought, suggesting that creation and worship are one and the same for the driving force of creation is the constant realization of the worshipping order.

Rumi's Life at a Glance

Mahvasholsadat Alavi
London Academy of Iranian Studies, UK

"*Maulana Khodawadegar Jalal al-Din Mohammad b. Mohammad b. Hossein-e Balkhi Khorasani Rumi*", known as *Maulawi* or *Maulana* in Iran and Islamic world and Rumi in the West, was born in Persia in 1207 (see Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arafin* p.73) and died in Konya in 1273. His father—Baha al-Din Walad—like his father before him, was a preacher—*wa'iz*, jurist—*faqih* and gnostic—*'arif*, and it is recorded (see Aflaki's, *Manaqib al-Arefin* p. 30) that he described himself as a gnostic—*derwish*. In 1216 Baha al-Din moved the family to Baghdad where they stayed for a short time before departing for Hajj in spring 1217.

When Baha al-Din Walad, a follower of *Sheykh* Najm al-Din Kubra's Sufi school, left the East he clearly intended to perform Hajj, but it appears that he had also resolved to dedicate his life to *Allah*'s work, for, after Hajj they travelled North to Damascus and on Malatya in eastern Turkey where they arrived in the summer of 1217 Baha al-Din found a patron in Ismati Khatun—the wife of Fakhr al-Din Bahramshah Prince of Erzincan, who established a religious academy—madrassah, for Baha al-Din. As there is evidence that he attracted a circle of committed spiritual disciples around him, some have suggested that this was more a 'sufi centre'—khaneqah, than academic institution. Baha al-Din taught there for four years until after the death of Fakhr al-Din Bahramshah and his wife 'Ismati Khatun. (See Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arefin* p.24-25).

Shortly after, perhaps on the suggestion of his patrons' daughter, Saljuq Khatun—married to 'Izz al-Din Kay Kawous of Konya—he took the family to Larende—modem Karaman—about sixty-five miles south of Konya. Here, the local Seljuk governor Amir Musa provided premises for Baha al-Din's use. The family remained there for some seven years—during which time *Maulana*'s mother Mu'minah Khatun passed away, and in 1224, the 17

year-old *Maulana* married Gawhar Khatun, daughter of one of Bah al-Din's female disciples. She bore him two sons, the eldest 'Ala al-Din, was born circa 1225 and the younger, Sultan Walad circa 1226. (See Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arafin* p.25-26).

In 1229, the Seljuk Sultan 'Ala al-Din Kay Qobad invited Baha al-Din to Konya and accommodated him in the Altunpa Madrasah. (See Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arafin* p.29). It must have been there that he preached and taught until his death two years later—in February 1231 at almost 80 years old. (See Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arafin* p.32). He was buried in the Sultan's rose garden with a fulsome eulogy on his tombstone that lauds him as The Guide of Islamic Praxis; Reviver of the Sunnah; King of Clerics etc. He was an inspiring preacher and respected spiritual guide to a large group of disciples. Although he did not author any book, he maintained a Spiritual Journal that was published under the title *"Intimations"—Ma'arif.* This evidences that Bah al-Din had a rich inner life, many varied and vivid mystical visions, that his personal remembrance of *Allah—dhikr*, consisted of constant repetition of the word *Allah*, and that his concern was to be constantly in the Presence of *Allah*. He believed that *Allah* is both transcendent and immanent—in line with what *Allah* tells us in the *Qur'an*—"Truly We created man and know what his soul whispers to him, for we are nearer to him than his jugular vein." *Qur'an* 50:16. While *Allah* is completely 'other', He is also intimately close to His creation. Baha al-Din sought that nearness in both his inner and the outer world—not intellectually, but rather through the savour of its 'taste'—as direct experience of His presence and communication. He occupied himself with the *Qur'an* and its levels of meaning, via ascetic practice, self-deprivation, contemplation, prayer and outer observance. (See Aflaki, *Manaqib al-Arefin* p.7-55).

Many of the subjects, assumptions and attitudes in Baha al-Din's writings are to be found in *Maulana*'s *Mathnawi*—expressed, from his own perspective and understanding and in his own characteristic way. In grief at the loss of his father, *Maulana* left Konya and returned to Larende and later came back to Konya for ever. In 1242 or 43 Maulana's wife Gawhar Khatun died and in due course *Maulana* married the widow Kirra Khatun, who in the 1240's bore him a son, Muzaffar al-Din Amir 'Alim Chalabi (d. 1277) and a daughter, Malikah Khatun (d. 1303-6).

2—Education

When *Maulana*'s mentor, one of Baha al-Din's first disciples, arrived with Seyyed Burhan al-Din Muhaqqiq Termazi in Konya, a year after Baha al-Din's death, he sent for *Maulana*, gathered Baha al-Din's former disciples and took charge as their Spiritual Sheykh.

Together with *Maulana* he laid plans for the future. Thus, *Maulana* was enroled for four years of formal education in the Religious Sciences at schools in Syria (1233-37). On his return, Burhan al-Din guided his inward development via a regime of fasting—*sawm*, seclusion—*khalwat*, and intensive study of Baha al-Din's writings. This continued for nearly five year until *Maulana* was thirty-five, when Burhan al-Din withdrew to Kayseri where he probably died in 1241. Like his teacher Baha al-Din, Burhan al-Din also maintained a journey during the last ten or so years of his life. This records that he taught the need to "Die before you Die"; to struggle to overcome the base aspects of nature; and to seek "The Beloved" via fasting. He also stressed the importance of "Saints" or "Friends of *Allah*", in particular a spiritual mentor—*qutb*, one of which is said to exist at all times. Burhan al-Din was fond of poetry and particularly the poetry of Sana'i. Many quotations from the *Qur'an*, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, poets, and even the choice of stories in the *Mathnawi* may well have originated in Burhan al-Din's addresses and writing.Despite his already being referred to as '*Maulana*' during Burhan al-Din's lifetime, it is not clearly established when Jalal al-Din Rumi took over from his father. He may well have started teaching at the college after he had completed his education in Syria, but he is unlikely to have assumed the role of 'Spiritual Director' until after Burhan al-Din had left for Kayseri.

Maulana, now a qualified and respected jurist and teacher, inspiring preacher and spiritual guide to a group of devoted disciples was, like his father before him, a truly inspirational preacher with a considerable following amongst merchants and artisans, as well as Armenian and Greek Christians—of whom some converted to Islam.

3—Meeting Shams

On 29th November 1244, the sixty-year old Gnostic, *'aref*, *Shams al-Din Tabrizi*, the man who was to revolutionise *Maulana*'s life, arrived in Konya. For the sake of brevity, *Shams al-Din*, is referred to merely as *Shams*, Lit. 'the Sun' in Arabic. '*Shams*' was gifted with unusual spiritual abilities and sensibilities—as a child he had felt 'in contact 'with the spiritual world' and had experienced such passionate love for *Allah*, that he had eschewed his family and the empirical world. He recounted that a lethargy would descend every four or so days during which time he could not even eat. Just before puberty his experience of spiritual love became so intense he was unable to eat for thirty or forty days. While many forsake all things 'spiritual' at puberty and are only able to re-establish spiritual contact after extensive training, this apparently did not occur with *Shams* because his writings refer to 'Divine prompts' throughout his life. When *Shams* was growing

up, Tabriz overflowed with spiritual personalities; pirs, sheykhs, derwish and holy men—some educated and learned, others barely literate. It is not known from which he received his outer or his inner education but he had already studied a number of Religious Sciences and other disciplines by the time he arrived in Konya. As he preferred to learn via debate and discussion, he must have exhausted countless teachers and peers over his lifetime. As regards his inner education, he had had a sheykh, probably several, and had no doubt participated in mystical dances and whirling *sama'* with various groups. However, *Shams* who had high expectations and a demanding nature, must have frequently been disappointed because he was apparently involved with a succession of teachers and groups in his quest to find a true saint and "Friend of *Allah*"—*Wali*. He earned sufficient for his meagre needs by teaching children the *Qur'an*, but was wont to hide his spiritual state by posing as a merchant. *Shams*, the outsider who strove to follow the precepts and precedents of the Prophet Muhammad and to receive spiritual guidance and illumination directly from above wrote:

> 'I implored *Allah* to "allow me to mix with and become the companion to Your saints".In a dream it was said to me, "I will make you a companion of one saint." I asked, "Where is this saint?" The next night It was said to me in a dream, "He is in Anatolia (Rum)." When I finally saw him after a long time,it was said to me "It is still not time". Affairs are in pawn to their times. (*Maqalat Shams*, p 759-60, Chittic,W, Me & Rumi, p 179).

And it came to pass that when the time was ripe, the spiritually advanced, highly intelligent, learned, articulate, severe and demanding sixty-year old derwish *Shams* came to Konya. It has been calculated that he remained there for fifteen months and twenty-five days, in the company of *Maulana*—whom he had heard in Damascus some sixteen years earlier. While he had been impressed by what he heard then, and by *Maulana*'s spiritual potential, he had not thought him sufficiently mature to approach.

It is difficult to categorise the nature of their relationship as *Shams* himself was not sure how to describe it. On the one hand, *Maulana* was of a similar disposition to *Shams* who, tired of himself, longed for a companion with whom he could be himself without pretence, who would understand him and what he said. He also recognised *Maulana*'s high spiritual station and the benefit he could derive from being in his presence. On the other hand, he could see that as *Maulana* was not yet inwardly awakened to his station, a transformation was needed, one that he instinctively knew he could effect. In this regard, it was *Shams* who assumed the role of "Master". It was he who transformed *Maulana* from learned scholar—*'alim*, into

a lover—*'ashiq*, and gnostic—*'arif* with a clarity of sight with which to maintain direct communication and received inspiration from the spiritual world. *Maulana*'s own description of spiritual revolution is found in "*Divan Shams*": *Rubaya't* 1891and *Ghazal* 1372.

In the beginning, it appears that *Shams* exhausted *Maulana* in endless academic discussion of religion. An intellectual exercise no doubt employed to awaken his realisation that spiritual development is about direct spiritual experience and illuminator wisdom, rather than theoretical knowledge. To this end he forbade *Maulana* to read his father's writings and may even have suggested he stop reading altogether. Shifting focus from 'thought' to 'heart' experience is considered a necessary preliminary to spiritual development in several spiritual paths.

4—*Spiritual revolution*

The effectiveness of the heart—the principal spiritual organ of sufi development—is as with all other methods of communication, directly related to the clarity of its reception. To develop that ability, the heart needs to be cleansed via forms of purification such as ascetic practice. *Maulana*'s heart, though neglected, would already have been pure and his spiritual and psychic systems already developed by his piety and ascetic discipline, was thus ripe for *Shams* to awaken and ignite. That this transformation took place everyone is agreed, but precisely how it was achieved is another matter. However, it is evidenced by the extraordinary influx of creative energy and higher spiritual love, that inspired an outpouring of the most beautiful mystical poetry in the world.

It is clear from his poetry that during this period, *Maulana* had many transcendent mystical experiences, and had great experiential difficulty in being able to distinguish between *Shams* and *Allah*—or at any rate manifestation of *Allah*—as focus of his love and yearning. This suggests that in his absorption with *Shams*, their spiritual union had attained the point referred to in Sufi terminology as 'Annihilation in the Spiritual Guide—*Fana fi Sheykh*.

From his writing it appears that although this was probably inevitable, it was not a role that *Shams* sought or desired. It is also documented that *Shams* encouraged *Maulana* to join in *sama'*. This *Maulana* did to the surprise and/or consternation of some—their sober, deeply pious ascetic preacher and spiritual guide transformed into a 'drunken' Sufi, an ecstatic mystical poet, and whirling *derwish*.

The transformation described above, is in almost classical conformity with the models of spiritual transformation pursued by many *sheykhs* and traditions of "The Sufi Path of Love".

Maulana's case is singular in that he was no raw novice—already a person of considerable outer and inner standing, prepared and primed for what was to come—so the degree of depth, height, breadth and receptivity of his experience must have been extraordinary.

But *Shams* had not yet finished with *Maulana*. In order to raise him to the station beyond spiritual drunkenness—to experience the even more powerful transformative effect of the pain and suffering of love in separation—and to transfer *Maulana*'s annihilation and absorption—from himself to annihilation and absorption in *Allah*, *Shams* did what he must have known he would have to do from the outset—without warning he disappeared from Konya. While it is easy enough to glibly attribute the origin of *Maulana*'s poetry to some great influx of creativity and inspiration, where did the poet come from? There is such craftsmanship in his words that some think he had already developed poetic skills prior to *Shams*'s arrival—logical given the complexity of his Persian metres. It is apparent from biographical records that his composition has inextricable metaphysical connections, first with *Shams* and later, 'The Beloved' Himself.

Maulana was a *sheykh* and spiritual director of a reasonably large group of disciples; a professional preacher and teacher; a family man with children, not to mention relatives and retainers for whom he held responsibility. It is thus unsurprising that his prolonged preoccupation with *Shams* stoked tensions within all these groups. Hagiographies of *Maulana*—in some matters the only extant sources—although by definition exaggerations, all point to jealousies aroused in family members and disciples. Hugely gifted spiritually, but bereft of all social niceties, *Shams* was severe, dismissive and demanding, and not easily assimilated. He himself wrote:

> "The person who enters my company is distinguished by the fact that he loses his appetite for the company with others and finds it bitter. Not such that he loses his appetite and yet continues to keep company with them, but in such wise that he can not keep their company". (Shams al-Din Shirazi, *Maqalat-e Shams Tabrizi*, p.74).

If this had happened to *Maulana* there would certainly have been a number of very disappointed and jealous people in Konya. But to suggest, as the hagiographies do, that it was these jealousies which drove *Shams* away is to misunderstand *Shams*' purpose. He went because *Maulana* needed to suffer the pain of separation; had *Maulana* been a disciple of the ordinary kind, he would have been sent away from the *sheykh* at this point.

Since *Maulana* could not leave Konya, it was *Shams* who had to go. And suffer *Maulana* did, but far from seeking consolation in the company

of others, he was inconsolable and withdrew—and in seclusion so did his poetry. It is not known for how long this lasted—six months or a year—before a letter arrived from *Shams*. He immediately sent poetry via his younger son Sultan Walad to induce *Shams* back. He was finally found in Syria and persuaded to return. Greatly relieved, *Maulana* resumed his compositions and participation in the *sama'*. That *Shams* was aware of the jealousy he had provoked is apparent from what he wrote on his return: "They felt jealous because they supposed that if I was not here *Maulana* would be happy with them. Now that I am back he belongs to all. They gave it a try but things got worse, and they got no consolation from *Maulana*. They lost even what they had, so that even the enmity toward me that swirled in their heads, disappeared. And now they are happy and show me honour and pray for me." The scholar M.A. Muwahid, who edited *Shams*'s writings under the title of "*Maqalat-e Shams-e Tabrizi*", suggests that *Shams* left in order to force *Maulana* to choose between his love for him and his desire to please disciples and maintain his position and reputation.

This view has certain merit because; **a)** In the *Mathnawi Maulana* describes how position and reputation—*Jah*, establish 'cages' which need to be escaped from for spiritual progress to be made and, **b)** It is not uncommon for sheykhs to break a disciples attachment to position and reputation. Although it is highly probable that this was part of the reason for *Shams*'s leaving, the primary reason is made clear in a letter from *Shams* to *Maulana*:

> "It would be good if you can manage it so that I do not need to go away for the sake of your development; that this one journey I have made would suffice to reform you. I'm not in a position to order you to go on a journey, so it is I who will be obliged to go away for the sake of your development, for separation makes a person wise. In separation one has to ask oneself. These exhortations and prohibitions were a small matter; why didn't I follow them? They were easy compared to the sufferings of separation. I would go away fifty times for your betterment. My going away is all for the sake of your development. Otherwise it makes no difference to me whether I am in Anatolia or Syria, at the Ka'abah or in Istanbul, except, of course, that separation matures and refines you". (Shams al-Din Tabrizi, *Maqalat-e Shams Tabrizi*, p.163-4).

Shams had left Konya in March 1246 and probably returned in April 1247, leaving *Maulana* with almost a year of intense personal suffering. However, on his return *Shams* resumed his close spiritual companionship

with *Maulana*. That autumn *Shams* married a member of a *Maulana*'s household. Meanwhile, tensions and jealousies had again begun to build up with the result that in late 1247, or early in 1248, *Shams*, as he had threatened, left Konya forever. Although *Maulana* went to Syria in search of him but failed, no credence can be given to the suggestion that *Shams* was murdered. Some time later *Maulana* went to Syria in a search that lasted months, possibly even two years. In around 1250 it seems he finally accepted he would never see *Shams* again. Although it is not possible to be certain—because a site there has been associated with the name of *Shams* Tabrizi since at least 1400—it is probable that *Shams* left Konya for Tabriz and not Syria.

In contrast to his first absence, *Shams*'s second did not disrupt the flow of *Maulana*'s composition. It is not possible to establish a chronology for the poems in his *Diwan* because none are dated, but some eighty poems are addressed or dedicated to Salah—al Din rather than *Shams*. That is Salah al-Din Fereidun Zarkub who came to Konya from a nearby village to train as a goldsmith and became a disciple of Burhan al-Din. When Burhan al-Din left for Kayseri, Salah al-Din retired to his village but returned to Konya circa 1242 and became close friends with *Maulana* after hearing him preach in the Bu al-Fazl mosque. In the upheaval of *Shams*'s comings and goings and the resultant indisposition of *Maulana*, it was Salah al-Din who held things together in *Maulana*'s household and amongst his disciples. As *Maulana* had appointed Salah al-Din his successor and deputy, it was he who preached and stood in for *Maulana* as Shaykh. After the spiritual loss of *Shams*, Salah al-Din became *Maulana*'s new spiritual axis. Hence there being eighty poems dedicated to Salah al-Din. Personally impressive and favoured by *Maulana* as he was, Salah al-Din was no *Shams*. However, with criticism being whispered about Salah al-Din, feelings became so aroused that a plot to murder him was discovered and defused by *Maulana*. One measure that improved relations was the marriage of *Maulana*'s second son Sultan Walad, to Fatimah Khatun—one of *Maulana*'s most advanced female disciples and daughter of Salah al-Din. Salah al-Din continued to fulfil his various roles until his death in 1258.

If Salah al-Din was the conduit by which local Turkish and Greek speakers established contact with *Maulana's* spiritual circle, his successor, Husam al-Din Chalabi, whose formative years had been spent within a fraternity, held a similar role amongst the youth guilds and fraternities so influential amongst the mercantile, artisan and military classes of Anatolia. As Husam al-Din had for years, as *Maulana*'s secretary, been in charge of his household's and the college's financial affairs, on the death of Salah al-Din, *Maulana* appointed him his designated successor—*khalifa* and deputy. Despite Husam al-Din's practical responsibilities being considerable, he

capably discharged them with *Maulana*'s full authority and must have held spiritual responsibility as the disciples' *Sheykh* on behalf of *Maulana*. *Maulana* treated him as he had *Shams* and Salah al-Din before him, as his spiritual axis. But it was not so much in his lyrical poems that Husam al-Din is adulated but in the *Mathnawi*—that *Maulana* refers to as "The Book of Husam". He invokes him as his muse at the beginning of each of the six books, and as convention dictated, praised him in extravagant terms in the Preface to Book One. However, he followed this fairly shortly afterwards with a dialogue between himself and Hus⁄m al-Din in which he makes it clear that in comparison, Husam al-Din was far from *Shams*' level of spiritual attainment.

In terms of rank, while he regarded Husam al-Din an excellent *sheykh* on the path to Spiritual Reality, he regarded *Shams* as "Part of Reality". This in no way diminishes Husm al-Din's standing because *Maulana* repeatedly insists that everyone, regardless of who they are needs a sheykh, to amongst other things, keep them spiritually honest. He cites the Prophet saying that even *'Ali*, his own son-in-law u needed him to be his sheykh. That *Maulana* considered Husam al-Din an excellent *sheykh*, is evidenced in his letter to the Sultan recommending Husam al-Din be appointed *Sheykh* to a particular Sufi lodge.

5—*Maulana's works*

Poetry works, "*Mathnawi Ma'nawi*", "*Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi*" or "*Divan-e Kabir*", prose works: "*Fihe ma Fih*", "*Majales-e Sab'a*" and "*Maktubat*".

Above all, it is for his part in the production of the "*Mathnawi*" that Husam al-Din deserves the gratitude of posterity. For Husam al-Din was *Maulana*'s amanuensis and wrote down every verse that *Maulana* composed, recited it back to him and suggested any revisions.

Sometimes, as is apparent from the text, these sessions continued until dawn. Given that the *Mathnawi* contains over 25,000 verses, this was a huge and demanding undertaking for the both of them. It seems likely that the *Mathnawi* was started around 1260 with the first book being completed in 1262. A two-year hiatus in this work followed the death of Husam al-Din's wife, when he withdrew to be alone with his sorrow and during which time *Maulana* ceased to compose. They resumed work in 1263-4 and continued until all the six books had been completed—probably not long before *Maulana*'s death in December 1273.

The biographers state that Rumi began the *Mathnawi* at the request of his favourite disciple, Husam al—Din Chalabi, who had noticed that many of Rumi's devotees spent a good deal of time reading the didactic

poetry of Sanaei and 'Attar, the two great masters of this genre before Rumi. Such works present Sufi teachings in a form readily accessible and easily memorized. They are much more suited to the warmth and fellowship of Sufi circles than the classical textbooks on the same subject, often written in dry and stilted language.

Such poetry could be read and enjoyed by anyone with a command of the language and a certain amount of direct intuition (of the Real)—*dhawq*, the classical textbooks on the other hand could only be understood after formal training in the religious sciences.

When the mystical poet Jami described the *Mathnawi* as "*The Qur'an in Persian*" he was making a statement on a number of levels. At the most obvious level, there are many direct quotations from the *Qur'an* in the *Mathnawi*—one estimate is around 1300 verses of the *Qur'an* alluded to or quoted and then commented on—as well as many less obvious and less easily detected resonances. There are also many references to personages, episodes or stories in the *Qur'an*. Not only are these references and quotations used as part of the explicit teaching and edification of the poem, but the style of the *Mathnawi* itself was also designed to be reminiscent of the *Qur'an*, as is apparent from a passage in Book Three. In this passage there is a wretched fellow who does not have a high opinion of the *Mathnawi* because it is just a story of the Prophet that consists of imitation and does not treat the spiritual path systematically from asceticism to union with *Allah*. *Maulana*'s reply is that this is just what the unbelievers said when the *Qur'an* was revealed: that it was just legends and tales; that it lacked profound enquiry and lofty speculation; that little children could understand it; that it was just a list of 'dos and don'ts' with accounts of Joseph and his curly hair and Josef and Zulaikha that It was so simple, anyone could follow it and it was not intellectually challenging. To this critic *Allah* replied: 'If this seems so 'easy' to you, then compose yourself one *Surah* in a style as 'easy' as the *Qur'an*, or even just one verse!' In this episode *Maulana* deliberately underlines the correspondence in style between the two works.

He follows this passage with an entire section devoted to the *Qur'an* but from quite a different level and point of view. 'Know that the words of the *Qur'an* have an exterior sense, and that below this sense there is an overpowering inner sense; and below that inner sense is another inner sense in which all intellect becomes lost; and below this sense, there is a fourth sense which none perceive other *Allah*, who is incomparable and without equal.'(Book Three, verses 4244-4245).

When *Maulana* states in the Arabic preface to Book One that one of the functions of the *Mathnawi* is to expound the *Qur'an*, it must be understood as the *Qur'an* in its fullness in all the senses described above other than of course, the last.

There is an almost universal Sufi concern with the spiritual—esoteric, allegorical orsymbolic interpretation—of the *Qur'an*—*ta'wil*, the dialectical complement of *tanzil* (sending down—Revelation): the one brings the *Qur'an* from above, the other refers to its transcendent source. According to a classic text: "He who practices *ta'wil* is the one who turns his speech from the external (exoteric) form towards the inner reality—*Haqiqat*." The mystical exegetical process must not be assimilated to the distinction between form and spirit, or sign and reality. This last point is important because mystical exegesis is notthe same as scriptural hermeneutics; it is not the pursuit of meanings; but rather esoteric reference to the *Qur'an*: *Allah*. Then continues: "In other words, it is only the Sufi who knows the true depth of the *Qur'an* ; he alone is aware of the full reality it reveals. At the deepest level, the mystic becomes conscious, as must we, that there is no secret *above* or *behind* the sacred text: the text *is* the secret—if only one knows how to "read" it. *Maulana* is scathing of attempts by people to "interpret" the *Qur'an* using their ordinary human reason, especially when what they produce is simply what they want it to mean anyway. For *Maulana*, to expound the *Qur'an* is to express in his own way the esoteric realities that were revealed to him through the *Qur'an*. This he does in the *Mathnawi*, and the correspondence he makes between the *Qur'an* and the *Mathnawi* implies that the *Mathnawi* too requires the opening of the esoteric consciousness to meet with the realities,—*haqiqat*, that are contained therein.

Sufism, or Islamic mysticism, evolved organically from two sources: the first, contemplation of the *Qur'an*; the second, obeying and following the example of *Allah*'s Prophet and messenger. As *Shams* and *Maulana* were totally dedicated to both, in addition to the 1300 verses of the *Qur'an* that are explicitly referred to in the *Mathnawi*, there are also no less than 750 traditions—*ahadith*, that relate to, or are derived from, the Prophet and many from *Imam Ali* from "*Nahj al-balaghah*" to be found there. *Maulana* and *Shams* both shared the mystical veneration of the Prophet that had become virtually universal amongst Sufis of their time. They considered him to be the Perfect Man—*Insan-e Kamil*, exemplar of the highest spiritual perfection attainable by a human beings, a light from the un-created Divine Light that preceded creation. Although most of *Maulana*'s poetic energies were directed to the production of the *Mathnawi* in the later years of his life, he still occasionally produced short lyrical poems:

> Some to mark special occasions, some for particular people, and some for use in thecollective sessions of the *sama'*. The full collection of his shorter lyrical poems is known as the "*Diwan-e Shams-e Tabrizi*". In Furuzanfar's ten-volume critical edition there are well over three thousand separate poems that consist

> of some 40 thousand lines of verse. Nicholson's critical edition of the *Mathnawi* contains just over 25 and a half thousand verses. This astonishing poetic output by anybody's standards, totals some sixty five thousand lines. In addition to the poetry, there is a collection miscellany of some 71 talks and discourses by *Maulana* entitled "*Fi'he ma fih*", Lit. 'In it is what is in it'. It is not known who recorded the talks or edited the collection, but it is thought it was produced after *Maulana*'s death. The discourses, of great interest and in informal style are regarded asbeing fully authentic. There is also a collection of seven of *Maulana*'s sermons entitled Seven Gatherings—"*Majalis-e Sab'a*", probably from a pre-Shams part of *Maulana*'s life. Finally, there are collected letters, "*Maktubat*", that hardly mention spiritual matters. These are largely addressed to statesmen, kings or nobles to seek economic or social assistance on behalf of disciples or family members, or to recommend particular people for various positions.

It is not known precisely when the *Mathnawi* was completed but there is no reason to think that its 'unfinished' appearance was anything other than deliberate—for the subject matter at that point was ready to move to a domain beyond words. *Maulana*, who died on December 17th 1273 after a life rich in spiritual achievement and experience, left a legacy of such creativity that it still resonates to this day. The *Mathnawi* has been translated into many languages in addition to Arabic, French, English and German.

In Germany

Rumi first captured the mind of the Western public in the German speaking countries.

Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856), ***Friedrich Ruckert*** (1788-1866), ***Wincenz von Rosenzweig-Schwannau, Hanns Meinke*** (1884-1974) ***Ernst Bertram*** (1884-1957) ***Johann Christoph Burrgel, Gunter G. Wolf, Hellmut Ritter*** (1892-1971), ***Fritz Meier (1912-98) and Annemarie Schimmel*** (1922-2003) had published some translations of *Mathnawi and Divan-e Shams* and very significant research on Rumi.

In French

Eva de Vitray-Meyerovitch published numerous significant works on Rumi since 1972 included: *Mystique et poesie en Islam: Djalal-od Din Rumi et l'order des derviches tourneurs, Rumi et le soufism.* Her translations

include *Odes mystiques: Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi par Mawlana Djalal-od Din Rumi (*Paris,1973), a selection of poems from *Divan Shams*, translated in collaboration with Mohammad Mokri, *Le Liver du de dedans: Fihi-ma-fihi Djalal od-din Rumi* (Paris,1976), *Letters*: *Djalal od-din Rumi (*Paris,1990*)*, (it is the first selection of Rumi's letters in any European language), a full translation of the *Mathnawi* as *Mathnawi: La quete de l'absolu* (Monoaco, du Rocher,1990).

In English in the 19th century

Redhouse (1811-92), ***Wilson*** (B.1858) and ***Winfield*** (1836-1922), translated some parts of the *Mathnawi.*

In the 20 century, ***Nicholson, R.A*** (1868-1945) translated and edited the complete Farsi edition of the *Mathnawi* in addition to providing a commentary on some of the verses (based upon Anqoravi's commentary of the *Mathnawi*). His othere works are: "*Rumi, poet and Mystic*", "*selected poems*", "*tales of mystic meaning*", "*Selected poems from the Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi*". Nicholson along with Fourozanfar was the century's greatest scholar of Rumi.

Arberry, A.J (1905-1969) later translated some stories of the *Mathnawi.* His works on Rumi and *Mathnawi* are: "*Discourses of Rumi*", "*Tales from the Mathnawi*", "*More tales from the Mathnawi*", "*Mystical Poems of Rumi*", "*Rubaiyat of Jalal al-Din Rumi*", "*Rumi, Poets and Mystic*".

Afzal Iqbal (1919-1994) published "*The Life and works of Muhammad Jalal-ud-Din Rumi*" in Lahor in 1974, he later published two books called *the impact of Maulana Jalal-ud Din Rumi on Islamic Culture* and *Reflactions on Rumi.*

Erkan Turkmen published "*The Essance of Rumi*" in 1992 in Konya and "*Rumi as a True Lover of God*" in Istanbul in 1988.

M.G. Gupar, published a translation and commentary of the *Mathnawi* as "*Maulana Rumi's Masnawi*" in Agra since 1990.

William Chittick published The Sufi Path of Love: "*The Spiritual Teaching of Rumi*" in Albany, Suny,1983.

Seyed Ghahreman Safavi published "*Rumi's Thoughts*" in 2003 and "*The Structure of Rumi's Mathnawi*" in London, 2006.

The best interpretations of the Mathnawi in Persian

"*Jawar al-Asrar*" by ***Kamal Al-Din Husayn Khawrazmi*** (d. 1437), published by Javad Shariat in Isfahan, Mash'al,1981.

"*Lub al-Lubab*" by ***Mulla Husayn Kashefi***, edited by Nasrollah Taqawi, Tehran, 1996.

"*Hashih-e Da'ei*", by ***Nazam al Din Mahmud Shirazi*** (15th Century).

"*Lataef al-m'anawi*", by ***Abd al-Latif al-'Abassi***, in India (d.c. 1639).

"*Sharh-e Mathnawi*", by ***Vali Mohammad Akbar Abadi***, in India (1728).

"*Sharh-e Bahr al-'Ulum*", by ***Mohammad b. Nezam al-Din Bahr al 'Ulum***, in India(1731-1810).

"*Konuz al-erafan va romuz al-iqan*", by ***Mohammad Saleh Qazwini Rowghani***, in Iran (1705), published by Ahmad Mojahed in Tehran, Rowzane, 1374/1995.

"*Asrar al-ghoub*", by ***Khwaje Ayyub***, (1708).

Mohammad Javad Shariat has recently published a two volume edition of this text in Tehran by Asatir,1337/1998.

"*Sharh Assrar-e Mathnawi*" by ***Mullah Hadi Subsawari***, in Iran (1858), (the greatest Iranian philosopher of the 19th century), edited by Mostafa Borujerdi and published in Tehran, 1374/1995.

"*Edition of the Divan-e Shams*" by ***Reza Qoli Khan Hedayat***, Tabriz, 19th century.

"*Nasr va Sharh-e Mathnawi*", by ***Musa Nasri***, line-by-line commentary on the six books of *Mathnawi*,Tehran,1948-1951.

In the 20th century, the 8 volumes of ***Allama Muhammad Taqi Jaffari***, and the 6 volumes of ***Karim Zamani*** are the best complete Persian commentaries of the *Mathnawi*. p***rof Mohammad Este'lami*** has produced commentary with critical edition of the text of the Mathnawi in 7 volumes, Tehran, 1369/1990.

Prof. Badi' al-Zaman Foruzanfar (1900-1970) published "*Rumi biography*" in Tehran, 1937, for the first time edition of Rumi's *Fihe ma fih* in Tehran,1951, The sources of the *Mathnawi*'s stories as "*Maakhez-e qesas va tamsilat-e Mathnawi*", Tehran,1954, edition of full complete text of "*Divan-e Shams*" in ten volumes, Tehran, 1957, "*Sharh-e Mathnawi*", on book one, Tehran, 1967, "*Ahadith-e Mathnawi*", Tehran,1969.

One significant comparative study on *Mathnawi* and *Diwan-e Shams* with *Qur'an* (*Nokhbat al-irfan men ayyat al-Qur'an wa Tafsireh:Tatbiq-e Ashar Mathnawi wa Kolyyat-e Sham ba Qur'an Karim*) which has written in 1951by late Gnostic scholar "***Hadi Haeri***" (1890-1980) who was master of great scholars such as Allama Muhammad Taqi Jaffari, Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad Kazem 'Assar, Dr. Mohit Tabataei and Prof. Seyyed Hossein Nasr published in Tehran by Haqiqat press in 2004.

Prof. Homaei (1900-1980), ***Dr. Zarrinkub*** (1922-1999), ***Prof. Shahidi, Dr. Gowharin*** (d.1995), ***Dr. Pourjavadi, Dr. Sorush*** and ***Dr. Pournamdarian*** contributed to the understanding of the Rumi and *Mathnawi* in their works.

In Turkish

The best of the Turkish commentaries is "*Fateh al abyat*" by ***Rosukhi Esmaeil Anqarawi*** (d.1631) in 7 volumes that includes a Turkish translation of each line of Rumi's Persian, as well as a commentary; Nicholson (M. p. xii) said that this work proved more helpful to him than any other in preparing his English commentary.

Recently ***Abdulbaqi Golpinarli*** has produced commentary with critical edition of the text of the *Mathnawi* in Turkey and full translation of the lyric poems of "*Divan-e Kabir*" with notes and commentary in 1957-1974 and Turkish version of "*the Discourses*" (1959), "*the Letters*" (1963), and "*the Seven Meetings*" (1965), "*biography of Rumi*" (19959), "*the history of the Mevlevi order*" (Istanbul,1953), "*the costumes and principles of the Mevlevi order*" (Istanbul,1963).

In Arabic

"*Almanhaj al-qawi le tullab al-Mathnawi*" by ***Changi Yusof Dede b. Ahmad al-Mowlawi*** (according to Golpinarli, in *Melvlevi bad az moulana*, p.187-8,his death in 1669).

Another complete Arabic translation and commentary on the *Mathnawi* has written by ***Ibrahim al-Dasuqi Shita*** (d.1999) in six volumes in Cairo. ***Mohammad 'Abd al-Salam Kafafi*** professor in the university of Cairo and Beirut published a book on *the life and poetry of Rumi*, "*Jalal al-Din al-Rumi fi hayatih wa sh'irih*" in Beirut, 1971, and translation of book one of the *Mathnawi* to Arabic with commentary, "*Mathnawi of Jalal al-din al-Rumi*" in Sayda,1965.

In Japan

Toshihiko Izutso, the great scholar of speculative sufism translated *Rumi's Discourses* into Japanese from frozanfur's edition as "*Rumi goroku*".

Maulana a Great Muslim 'Arif

It is now necessary to examine the word Sufi as it might have been understood in *Maulana*'s time. As there are many excellent accounts of Sufism in general and monographs of individual orders or particular Sufis, it is not necessary to repeat material available elsewhere. If Sufism is considered as a particular way of life for a Muslim, a life totally dedicated

to *Allah* and surrender to *Allah*'s Will, then *Maulana* was a Sufi. If, to be a Sufi means to belong to an Order, to swear allegiance to a *sheykh*, and to follow the rites, rituals and practice of that Order, then *Maulana* was not a Sufi. The foundation of Orders began from about 1150 onwards, but in *Maulana*'s lifetime the institutionalisation of Sufism, was not universal by any means. There were still many individuals, like *Shams*, who were highly developed spiritually, but who were free spirits who did not belonging to any particular Sufi Order. Equally there were many groups of disciples who gathered round spiritual figures, who trod the spiritual path, but who had no wish to be institutionalised.

Maulana would have identified himself and *Shams* as Sufis in the general sense but not in the institutional sense. Earlier in this Chapter it was suggested that the institutionalisation of his group into an Order was an option for *Maulana*, but was one he rejected, choosing instead to pass on his guidance through his poetry in the *Mathnawi*.

There was one requirement above all others that *Maulana* considered vital for spiritual development, and that was the need of every spiritual aspirant to have a *sheykh*—whether or not within the context of an institutional Sufi Order. He had had his own father, Burhan al-Din and *Shams* as his *sheykhs*, and even when his own transformation had been effected by *Shams*, he still respected this need and considered as his *sheykh*, first Salah al—Din and then Husam al-Din. Often he warns in the *Mathnawi* against attempting to tread the spiritual path alone. There are many passages, even entire discourses, to stress the need to have a *sheykh*. The reasons are: first, because the opposition in the form of the deviousness of one's own selfhood, the *nafs*, inspired by Satan—*Iblis* is so strong, one would quickly be overcome without one; second, because one cannot see oneself one needs to have a sheykh as a mirror in which to see one's true state, and in which to find the reflections of Divine mysteries; third, only a *sheykh* who has died to self has the spiritual insight and disinterestedness to require the efforts and sacrifices necessary for spiritual progress at each particular stage from the aspirant.

While the *sheykh* remains the central spiritual focus for the aspiring Sufi, *Maulana* alsospeaks of the saint—*wali*, or 'friend of *Allah*', of whom there are various grades, with a *qutb*, or spiritual axis, holding responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the world at any particular time. Another term *Maulana* uses is the Perfect Man—*Insan al-kamil*, which refers to one who has attained the highest degree of spiritual perfection achievable for a human being. *Maulana* often also speaks of the prophets and of the angels. Saints and prophets derive their spiritual Insight via the Universal Intellect or Intelligence, *'aql-e kull*, although not all necessarily to the same degree. The intellect or intelligence, *'aql*, inherent in ordinary human

beings is termed *'aql-e juzwi*, or partial intellect, because it is veiled from the Universal Intellect by the murky clouds of selfhood, the *nafs*. One of the tasks of the spiritual path is to disperse these clouds of selfhood so that the *'aql*, the intellect, which is an attribute of the spirit, *ruh*, may begin to receive indications from the *'aql-e kulll*, or Universal Intellect. This is one of the themes developed in Book One but there is no need to delve into this here.

It is perhaps unnecessary to stress that, although born in what is now Afghanistan, and resident in what is now Turkey, *Maulana*'s culture was through and through Persian. His language was Persian, his sensibilities were Persian and his literary inheritance was Persian. As the third leg in this contextualisation of the *Mathnawi* it will be helpful briefly to examine its literary antecedents.

The Mathnawi Genre

Despite its Arabic name, *Mathnawi* is a literary form that is thought to be of purely Persian origin. It was used as the vehicle for didactic and narrative works in Persian from the tenth century CE. It was the preferred vehicle for long poems, presumably because, with the rhyme being internal to the verse—*bayt* and therefore changing with every verse, it was far less demanding on the poet's resources. The first major work in this form is *The Book of Kings—Shahnamah*, the Persian national epic written by ***Hakim Firdawsi*** around the year 1001 CE.

The Persians have a long history of didactic moralising literature that stretches back to pre-Islamic times in the 'Advice' or 'Wisdom' *Hikmat* tradition.

Hakim Sanaei, 11th century Iranian gnostic—'a*rif* and poet, is the acknowledged father of Persian mystical poetic literature. He lived in Sarakhs, where the popular Sufi Sheykh, Muhammad ibn Mansur Sarakhsi ran a Sufi meeting place (zawiyah)—khanakah, in which he resided for some time. Sanaei wrote *Divan ya Kulliat*, a work that according to Mudaris Razavi, consists of 13780 verses of odes—*Qasaed*, lyrics—*ghazaliyyat*, and *qata'at* and quatrains—*rubaiyyat*. His second book, "*The Garden of Reality and the Law of the Path—Hadyqah al-Haqiqah Ya Fakhri Nama Ya Illahi Nama*", one of the most significant andcelebrated books in the Persian literature, encompasses innumerable gnotic/irfanic concepts.

In this work, referred to as "*Hadyqah-e* Sanaei" he wrote. 'After the *Qur'an* and *ahadith*, nothing like this has previously been said'.

His third book is titled, "*The Journey of the Servants to the Place of Return—Sayr al 'Ibad' Ila'l—Ma'ad*". In the *Mathnawi* Book 3 verse 7350, *Maulana* refers to Sanaei as "Sage of the Unseen world and Pride

of Gnostics"—"*Hakim Ghaib wa Fakhr al-'arifin*". He is also recorded as having said, "Attar was a Spirit and Sanaei his two eyes, we came after Sanaei and 'Attar". In several places in the *Mathnawi*, *Maulana* includes quotations from Sanaei on which he thenmakes comment. For example, between verses 1762 and 1763 (In the Nicholson edition, Book 1 p. 96):

"Anything that causes you to be left behind on the way, be it be infidelity or face? Any form that causes you to fall from the beloved, be it be ugly of beautiful? . . ."

Maulana comments upon these lines in verses 1763 to 1814.

Another quotation from Sanaei, in Book 1 of the *Mathnawi*, after verse 2034 (in theNicholson edition):

"In the realm of the Soul are skies lording over the sky of this world. In the way of the spirit there are lowlands and highlands, there are lovely mountains and seas." *Maulana*'s comments appear in verses 2035-45.

References in which *Maulana* refers to Hakim Sanaei (in the Nicholson edition of the *Mathnawi*):

Book One: four times,
Book Three: three times,
Book Four: once
Book Six: once

These correlate with the Este'lami Persian Edition as follows:

Book One: verses 1773, 1915, 2046, 3440.
Book Three: verses 2773, 3752, 4294
Book Four: verse 2567
Book Six: verse 3362.

"*The Journey of the Servants to the Place of Return—Sayr al-'Ibad el al-Ma'ad*" is a small work of just 750 short verses. The poet relates his growth from birth to the spiritual maturity that enables him to recognise his ideal—his patron, the religious jurist who is Chief Justice of Sarakhs. He also includes a general description of the successive stages of life, each guided by three personifications: the nurse who represents the vegetative soul that guides physical growth, the tyrannical king who represents the animal soul and the old man who represents the 'active intelligence'—'*Aql-e fa'al*, that is open to the Universal Intellect.

With the guide, the narrator, the poet journeys through the various levels of the universe in each of which, he encounters allegorical equivalents of the forces in his nature, until finally, at the Universal level, he recognises the

Place of his Return. This *Mathnawi* provided the model for later allegories of the spiritual journey.

In quite different vein is the *Hadiqat al-Haqiqah wa Shari'at al-Tariqah*, about which it is difficult to speak with any great certainty because it exists in several early versions, each of different sizes. The oldest version is divided into three parts: an introductory section that deals with the Creator, the *Qur'an*, the Prophet etc.; the second section, deals with a wide range of topics relevant to those on the spiritual path—with warnings about the power to obstruct spiritual progress selfhood has, the dangers of this world and the inevitable approach of death; the third section begins as a panegyric to Bahramshah, Sultan of Ghazna, but quickly reverts to ethical and moral instruction for the king in the manner of the Mirror for Princes genre. The work is thus didactic, homiletic and wideranging in its subject matter. It is also known by two other names: "*Fakhri-Nameh*" after Bahram Shah to whom it is dedicated, and "*Ilahi-Nameh*" the name that *Maulana* uses in the *Mathnawi.*

In imitation of Sanaei, the poet ***Nizami Ganjawi*** (1141-1209) wrote a *mathnawi* entitled The Treasury of Secrets—"*Makhzan al-Asrar*" in honour of his patron Bahramshah of Erzincan of Eastern Anatolia whom it will be remembered, later also became patron to *Maulana*'s father and the family. Because of the family connection, and because it is known that *Maulana* was particularly fond of Nizami's poetry and urged his disciples to read it. it is worth looking at this *Mathnawi.*

While it is needless to explain that prodigious differences in scale and context exist between the *Mathnawi* of Nizami (*Makhzan al-Asrar*) and *Mathnawi* of *Maulana* what is of interest is that the variety of participants in the stories that are also found in *Maulana*'s masterpiece viz. kings, sages, Sufis, animals of all kinds, shop-keepers, barbers, farmers and historical and legendary personages.

Nizami is a poet's poet, his poetry is sophisticated and mannered, rather like the Elizabethan poets in English literature. In addition to the early didactic poem described, he also wrote four other *Mathnawis* : "*Layly and Majnun*",—a traditional story of self-denying love, and three that deal with subjects from the legendary history of Iran—"*Haft Paykar*" outlined in the next chapter, "*Khusraw and Shirin*", and "*Iskandar Namah*". It is difficult to establish to what extent these four poems with a potential spiritual dimension, may be called Sufi as they are predominantly the product of secular analogical court culture. It would be erroneous to claim that they are exclusively Sufi or exclusively court poems. While they certainly contain morality and wisdom and observance of the piety, in Nizami we find none of the flights of mystical imagination and profound spiritual understanding that are the hallmark of *Maulana*.

The true forerunner of *Maulana*—in terms of spiritual and mystical content—is the poet of Nishapur, ***Farid al-Din Attar***, (1142-1230) (also spelled ***Fariduddin Attar***) was born in Nishapour, in the Iranian province of Khorasan, and died in the same city. He lived almost a hundred years. He was killed during the raid and destruction of his city by the Mongol invaders. His tomb is in Neishapour. Attar is one of the most famous mystic poets of Iran. His works were the inspiration of Rumi and many other mystic poets. Attar along with Sanaei was two of the greatest influences on Rumi in his suffice views. Rumi has mentioned both of them with the highest esteem several times in his poetry. Rumi praises Attar as such: "*Attar roamed the seven cities of love—We are still just in one alley*". His works are "*Mantiq at-Tayr*" (The Conference of the Birds), "*Ilahi Nameh*" (the book of Divine), "*Musibat Nameh*" (the book of Affliction), "*Asrar Nameh*" (the book of Mysteries) and "*Tazkerat al-Ulia*". The first three stories set within an allegorical frame.

His *Mantiq at-Tayr* (*The Conference of the Birds)* is one of the definitive masterpieces of all Persian literature. Besides being one of the most beautiful examples of Persian poetry, this book relies on a clever word play between the words *Simorgh*—a mysterious bird in Iranian mythology which is a symbol often found in sufi literature, and similar to the phoenix bird—and "*Simorgh*"—meaning "thirty birds" in Persian. The stories recount the longing of a group of birds who desire to know the great *Simorgh*, and who under the guidance of a leader bird start their journey toward the land of *Simorgh*.

Another debt that *Maulana* owes 'Attar is in reference to the second *Mathnawi*, the "*Ilahi nameh*". In this, the frame story is of a Caliph with six sons. In his introduction, 'Attar indicates what the sons respectively represent: the first son, selfhood—*nafs*; the second, the Devil—*Iblis*; the third, intellect—*'aql* the fourth, knowledge—*'ilm*; the fifth, spiritual poverty—*faqr*; and the sixth son, Divine Unity or Realisation of the Uniqueness of *Allah*—*tawhid*. The Caliph fulfils the desires of each son but not in their initially expected manner. Through the medium of stories, he transforms the aim of each son from a worldly to a spiritual purpose. *Maulana*'s debt to this work is that his *Mathnawi* design contains six books, the overall subject of each being represented by each of the six sons above. Such inter-textuality is not to be regarded in any sense to be plagiarism but rather an act of homage to a master mystical poet—*Maulana*'s acknowledgement of his place on them shoulders of giants. It was also an author's statement that clearly indicated within which tradition he was locating himself.

Qur'an is the main source of Rumi's *Mathnawi*. He follows the *Quranic* style, concepts, massages and stories. He refers to most verses of *Qur'an* which are about spirituality, Unity, Day of Resurrection, Saints, perfect man and ethics. According to Jami "the *Mahnawi-e M'anawi* of *Mowlawi* is the *Qur'an* in Persian tongue".

According to ***Kamal Al-Din Hossein Khowrasmi*** (d.1437), in "*Jawahir al-Asrar*", the Rumi's *Mathnawi* is commentary of "*Nahja al-Balaqheh*" of Imam 'Ali.

Rumi in the Eyes of World Scholars

Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207-1273) described by ***Prof. E.G. Browne*** as "without doubt the most eminent Sufi poet whom Persia has produced, while his mystical Mathnawi deserves to rank among the great poems of all time".

Hegel considered him as on of the greatest poets and thinkers in world history. The French writer ***Marious Barres*** once confessed: "When I experienced Rumi's poetry, which is vibrant with the tone of ecstasy and with melody, I realised the deficiencies of Shakespeare, Goethe and Hugo".

Prof. R. A. Nicholson translated the *Mathnawi* of Rumi to English call Rumi as "the greatest mystical poet of any age".

The twentieth century German poet ***Hans Meinke*** saw in Rumi "the only hope for the dark times we are living in". (Seyed G. Safavi, on "*Rumi's Thoughts*", Tehran, 2003, Arberry, in preface of Afzal Iqbal book on: "*The life and works of Rumi*", London,1983).

Mohammad Baqer Khwansari (1811-95) in "*Rowzat al-Jannat*" (Beirot, 1991, 8:63), an encyclopedia of famouse relious scholars, which includes Rumi, and describes the *Mathnawi* as a book "esteemed by scholars and the common folk, whether Shiite or not". ***Jami*** (d.1492) significant Persian poet and *'arif* said "the *Mahnawi-e M'anawi* of Maulawi is the *Qur'an* in Persian tongue".

Anada Coomaraswamy (1877-1947) born in Sri Lanka, educated in England and resident in USA for the last thirty years of his life, called Rumi and Meister Eckhart the two piers of the bridge of understanding that finally span Western and Eastern civilisation. Erich Fromm author of the Art of Loving, praise Rumi as a precursor of the ideas of Renaisance humanism and the concept of religious tolerance as found in Erasmus or Nicholas de Cusa, he also admires Rumi's anticipation of Ficino's explanation of love "as the fundamental creative force".(Arasteh, A.R., "*Rumi, the Persian in Creativity and Love*", Boston,1974).

Bibliography

1—See on Rumi's Life

Aflaki, Ahmad, *Manaqeb al—'arefin*, Tehran, 1983.
Alavi, Mahvash, *Maulana, Khodawandegar-e Tariqat-e Ishq*, Tehran, 1998.
Chittick, William, *Me & Rumi*, Kentucky, 2004.
Foruzanfar, Badi'a al—Zaman, *Zendegi Maulawi*, Tehran, 1384.
Iqbal, Afzal, Rumi, Lahore, 1991.
Golpinarli, Abdulbaki, translated ito Farsi by Sobhani, Tofiq, *Maulana*, Tehran, 1996.
Lewis, Franklin, *Rumi: Past and Present, East and West*, Oxford, 2,000.
Sepahsalar, Faridun b, Ahmad, Edited by Vafaie, M. Afshin, *Risalah-e Sipah-Salar dar manaqib-i Khodavandegari*, Tehran, 1385.
Zarrinkub, Abdul Hossein, *Pelle-pelle ta molaqat-e Khoda*, Tehran, 1994.

2—See on Maulana's spiritual thought

Avani, Gholamreza, *The Legacy of Rumi—Collected Papers*, Volumes 1-6, The Iranian Institute of Philosophy, Tehran, 2007.
Ayene-ye Miras, Special Issue: Mawlana Jalal al-Din Muhammad Balkhi, Tehran, Autumn 2007.
Chittick, W, *The Sufi Path of Love*, SUNY, New York, 1983.
Homaei, Jalal al-Din, *Maulawi nameh*, Tehran, 1996/1374.
Ibrahimi, Mehdi, *Nasim wahy dar Mathnawi 'Ishq, Qom, 1384.*
Ja'fari, Mohammad Taqi, *Maulawi wa Jahanbinih dar maktabhay-e sharq wa gharb*, Tehran, 1992/1370.
Safavi, Seyed Ghahreman, *Rumi's Thought*, Tehran, 2003.
Safavi, Seyed Ghahreman, *The Structure of Rumi's Mathnawi*, London, 2006.
Safavi, Seyed, *The Structure of Book Three in Rumi's Mathnawi as a Whole*, in the Journal "Ayene-ye Miras" Autumn 2007, Tehran.
Safavi, Seyed, *The Structure of Book Six in Rumi's Mathnawi as a Whole*, in the Journal "Ayene-ye Miras" Autumn 2007, Tehran.
Safavi, Seyed Ghahreman, *Rumi Teachings*, USA, 2008.
Schimmel, A, *The Triumphal Sun*, Fine Books, London, 1978.
Turkmen, Erkan, *The Essence of Rumi's Mathnavi Including his Life and Works*, Konya, 2004.

Chapter Six

Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī on Love

Salman Bashier,
University of Utah, USA

Abstract

This article draws a comparison between Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī's views on lov(The comparison is based on Plato's *Symposium* and chapter 178 of Ibn al-'Arabī's *Futūhāt*. It seeks to provide answers to two main questions: 1) What is love? 2) What is love's purpose? The discussion will be divided into 4 sections as sections 1 and 2 provide an answer to the first question and section 3 provides an answer to the second question. In section 4, the author brings Donald Levy's account of Vlastos' criticism of Plato's theory of love and Levy's answer to the criticism. He also attempts to develop Levy's answer to the criticism by referring to Ibn al-'Arabī's theory of Creative Imagination.

This article draws a comparison between Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī's views on love. The comparison is based on Plato's *Symposium* and chapter 178 of Ibn al-'Arabī's

Futūhāt.[596] Like other comparisons that I have drawn between the two thinkers, [597] this comparison is conducted on the basis of the assumption that Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī's treatment of certain important philosophical themes may be seen as clarifying and, in a sense, complementing each other. I must make it explicit, however, that my assumption is not based on any considerations to the effect that a direct ideological connectedness could be established between the two thinkers.[598]

According to Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns the *Symposium* gives the most vivid and arresting portrait of Socrates and contains an excellent expression of Plato's belief that things not seen are eternally important.[599] The *Symposium* consists of a series of speeches given by

participants, who were considered by Socrates as authorities on love, rather than a continued argument carried out by Socrates and followed by one or more interlocutors, as it is the case with most of the Platonic dialogues.[600] Unlike other dialogues in which Socrates seems to be speaking with the voice of the skeptic and proclaiming that the only thing that he knows is that he does not know anything, [601]in the *Symposium* he seems to be explicitly assertive of being knowledgeable about a certain matter, namely, love [602] assuring his interlocutor that what he says is "the truth that you find unanswerable."[603] However, this relaxation of the skeptical, or, what is seen by many as, the Socratic ironic tone in the *Symposium* becomes even more ironic when Socrates' special manner of characterizing the subject matter that he confesses knowledge about is carefully examined. For, the main definition that Socrates provides for love in the *Symposium* is that it cannot be subject for rational definition.[604]

One might detect in the *Symposium* a certain gap between Socrates' philosophical investigations, which seek to establish the transcendent character of things not seen, and his personal conduct, which seems to be as sensual as the title of the dialogue under discussion might indicate. Socrates expresses in the *Symposium* the view that things that are not seen, like the Form of beauty, are nobler than bodily things and that the student of philosophy must abandon the latter for the sake of the former. Yet, in this dialogue he is expressing this view in a drinking party, which he opens by sitting next to Agathon, "the handsomest man in the room," and ends up by sitting besides Alcibiades, with whom he "fell in love".[605] Thus, one might be tempted either to think, with Alcibiades, that Socrates was practicing that "ironical simplicity of his."[606] Or, one might seek to explain the gap away by referring to some conceptual failure in our part to connect with certain social or personal conducts that were considered rather ordinary in the Greek world. It turns out, however, that even when Socrates was pressed to take part in sensual activities, his participation never seemed to affect his (balanced) rational behavior.[607] From dialogues like *Symposium* we learn that Socrates engaged himself in such occasions as drinking parties, in which he associated with his beloveds and admirers, because he found in these the context of the philosophical conversation that allowed him to carry out his philosophical inquiries.[608] Although Socrates' frequent mention of his inclination to beautiful youths like Agathon and Alcibiades makes it hard to altogether deny any kind of homosexual tendency in his part,[609] this mention of homosexual inclination must be understood as indicating a philosophically rooted inclination, an inclination that is rooted in the love for the beautiful wisdom that dwells in beautiful bodies. It is something much like the inclination of *Sūfis* (Muslim mystics) for contemplating the beauty of a beardless boy (*fatā amrad*).[610] As we are going to see, Ibn al-'Arabī

mentions the love for boys in chapter 178 of the *Futūhāt*,[611] in addition to other explicit sensual allusions that he provides in this chapter.[612] However, his mention of these things should be considered from his unique perspective of the unity of the natural and the spiritual aspects of reality. Stripped from the context of this perspective, Ibn al-'Arabī's sensual allusions become, as they sometimes have, the subject of unjustifiable misunderstanding.[613]

William Chittick states that, unlike many *Sūfis*, who emphasize love more than knowledge, Ibn al-'Arabī considers knowledge a superior means of arriving at God.[614] Although correct, this view must be qualified to account for Ibn al-'Arabī's unique depiction of the close interconnection between love and knowledge. This is partly what this article aims to do, namely, to emphasize the mutual relationship between love and knowledge in Ibn al-'Arabī's mystical theory. Ibn al-'Arabī provides his most extensive discussion of the subject of love in chapter 178 of the *Futūāt*, entitled "On Knowing the Station of Love."[615] He opens the chapter with a long recitation (60 lines) of poetry. Here are the first three lines:

> Love is related to the human being and to God with a relationship that is not known to our knowledge.[616]
>
> Love is a tasting; [617]its reality is not known. By God it is a wonder.
>
> The identity (*hawiyya*) of the necessities (*lawāzim*) of love clothes me with the garment of opposites [so that I become] like the absent-minded (*sāhī*) present.[618]

Ibn al-'Arabī follows these lines of poetry with an account of the Qur'ānic verses and the sayings of the Prophet that bear mention to love, emphasizing the Prophet's saying:

> I was a Treasure but was not known, so I loved to be known; I created the creatures and made Myself known to them, so they came to know me. [619]

He says that love is the root of existence, since it is out of His love to be known that God creates the creatures. In the following three sections of chapter 178 he provides a discussion of what he considers as the three kinds of love: natural, spiritual and divine. In the rest of the chapter he provides an account of the attributes and the descriptions of the lovers.[620]

The following comparison between Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī seeks to provide answers to two main questions: 1) What is love? 2) What is love's purpose? The discussion will be divided into 4 sections as sections 1 and 2 provide an answer to the first question and section 3 provides an answer to

the second question. In section 4, I bring Donald Levy's account of Vlastos' criticism of Plato's theory of love and Levy's answer to the criticism. I also attempt to develop Levy's answer to the criticism by referring to Ibn al-'Arabī's theory of Creative Imagination. I will conduct my discussion on the basis of an epistemological model of the mystical experience borrowed from Plato's *Seventh Letter*. I will first cite Plato's words and then elaborate:

> The study of virtue and vice must be accompanied by an inquiry into what is false and true of existence in general and must be carried on by constant practice throughout a long period, as I said in the beginning. Hardly after practicing detailed comparisons of names and definitions and visual and other sense perceptions, after scrutinizing them in benevolent disputation by the use of question and answer without jealousy, at last in a flash understanding of each blazes up, and the mind, as it exerts all its powers to the limit of human capacity, is flooded with light. [621]

Plato makes a distinction between two processes of acquiring knowledge, as one process is carried out by means of rational conceptualization, while the other process extends beyond rationalization. I consider this account of the two processes of acquiring knowledge as Plato's comprehensive depiction of the epistemological aspect of the mystical experience. Epistemologically, the mystical experience consists of an activity that 1) exhausts all conceptual means and arrives at the limits of rationality, 2) transcends these limits and enjoys a presence in a realm beyond conceptual rationalization. This epistemological model of mystical transcendence invites a definition of the rationalism that is to be transcended. In the following I arrange a definition of rationalism that consists of three parts:

1. (Following Parmenides) Rationalism is always related to existence never to nonexistence.[622]
2. Rationalism is "the position that reason has precedence over other ways of acquiring knowledge, or, more strongly, that it is the unique path to knowledge", [623] as reason is occupied with setting limits and definitions to the objects of knowledge.
3. Rationalism seeks to provide a representation for things in existence and, as a comprehensive system of thought, to provide representation to existence as a whole.

As we can see, the three parts of the definition of rationalism continue one another, since existence implies limitation and limitation implies

the possibility of representation. In the following three sections of the discussion, which I arrange in correspondence to the three parts of the proposed definition, I attempt to show that Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī's treatment of the subject of love fits into the epistemological model of the mystical transcendence presented above.

1. Love's Object is a Nonexistent Thing

1a. Plato

In the *Symposium*, Socrates brings his interlocutor, Agathon, to the conclusion that Love's desire is related not to what Love is in love with, but rather to the permanence of what Love has, that is, to something that Love attempts to secure forever:

> And so, if we heard someone saying, 'I'm healthy, and I want to be healthy; I'm rich, and I want to be rich; and in fact I want just what I've got,' I think he should be justified in saying, 'But, my dear sir, you've *got* wealth and health and strength already, and what you want is to go on having them, for at the moment you've got them whether you want them or not. Doesn't it look as if, when you say you want these things here and now, you really mean, what you have got now, and you want to go on keeping?' Don't you think, my dear Agathon, that he'd be bound to agree?
>
> Why, of course, he would, said Agathon.
>
> Well, then, continued Socrates, desiring to secure something to oneself forever may be described as loving something which is not yet to hand.
>
> Certainly. [624]

Loving something that is not yet to hand is loving something that has not existed yet. From here we can draw the conclusion that loving is always for that which is bound never to exist, because once it has existed it is no longer that which *is not* yet to hand. Socrates draws the further conclusion that Love lacks in what is beautiful and what is good. For it is agreed that Love's will is related to what is beautiful. It is also agreed that the good is beautiful. But it has been shown that Love's will is related to a thing that Love lacks. Therefore, Love must be lacking both in what is beautiful and in what is good. This conclusion seems to be in contrast to all the speeches that preceded Socrates', which emphasized Love's noble traits like beauty

and goodness, and to the very purpose for which sake the symposium was arranged, namely, to *praise* Love.

1.b Ibn al-'Arabī

In a striking similarity to Plato, Ibn al-'Arabī states that Love is a will that is related to something and that that something is a nonexistent thing. Like Plato, he argues that it would not make sense to say that Love can be related to something that exists with the lover:

> Our saying that the will seeks the existence of the beloved [from the one side] and [from the other side] that the beloved is in reality a nonexistent thing means the following. The beloved for the lover is a will that necessitates union [connection] with a specific person, whosoever that person might be. The person might be one who is interested in embracing and so the lover loves to embrace him, or, engaging in sexual intercourse and so the lover engages in sexual intercourse with him, or, one who likes to converse and so the lover engages in conversation with him. The love of the lover depends in all these occasions on a nonexistent thing at the time of being with the person, even though the lover thinks that the object of his love depends on the person himself. In fact, the nonexistent thing is what makes the lover want to meet the beloved and see him . . . Given that the beloved exists with him in his person, it would not make sense to say that the love of the lover bears *reference* to something [that exists with the lover]. [625]

Ibn al-'Arabī brings the following objection to his statement—that Love's object is a nonexistent thing—and states his own answer to the objection, which emphasizes that Love's object is the permanence of what the lover has achieved and that this permanence can never enter into existence entirely:

> You may object and say: We loved sitting with a person, or kissing, or embracing, or intimacy, or conversation. Then we saw that it was achieved, but love did not disappear, even though there was embracing and mutual arrival. Hence, the object of love does not have to be nonexistent. We would reply: you are mistaken. When you embrace the person, and

> when the object of your love had been embracing, or sitting together, or intimacy, you have not achieved the object of your love through this situation. For the object is now the continuance and permanence of what you have achieved. This continuance is nonexistent. It has not entered into being (*wujūd* in Chittick), and its period has no end. Hence, in the state of arrival, love attaches itself only to a nonexistent thing, and that is its permanence.[626]

Love seeks a state in which the permanence of loving is achieved. But the permanence of loving is by definition infinite. Since existence is identified with finitude, the infinity of the state of Love implies its nonexistence. It is the same to say that the object of Love is infinite and that it is nonexistent. This is so provided that we properly conceive the nature of the nonexistence in question. It is not the nonexistence that is the simple negation of existence but rather the nonexistence that transcends the limited existence, which is only the limited manifestation of Love's object.

2. Love is not Subject to Rational Definition

2a. Plato

Socrates argues that Love lacks in what is beautiful and what is good. His reasoning seems to be convincing and Agathon finds himself forced to agree. But had Socrates been able to convince himself? From what follows it becomes clear that that was not the case. Socrates now tells Agathon about lessons that he was taught by Diotima, a woman who, according to him, possessed divine powers and who taught him the philosophy of Love.[627] Socrates does not reveal the rationale that leads him to committing this shift in the conversation. But it is not hard to figure it out. For, the same logic that teaches us that love must be lacking in beauty and goodness also teaches us that it cannot be lacking in beauty and goodness absolutely. For, although it is true that Love cannot long for what it has already achieved, it is also true that Love cannot long for what it lacks absolutely.[628] From here, the sort of nonexistence claimed for the object of Love must be qualified and that is what Diotima tries to do by creating a middle term between existence and nonexistence. Diotima says that if a thing is not beautiful it is not bound therefore to be ugly but could be something that comes between the two.[629] She is telling Socrates that Love's reality is liminal. Love is a Limit between the existence of beauty and its nonexistence, the existence of the good and its nonexistence. Socrates now asks about the manner of

the coming to being of this liminal entity, and Diotima answers in the form of a myth. The heroes of the myth are the god Resource, the son of Craft, who got drunk of the heavenly nectar on the day of Aphrodite's birth party in the garden of Zeus, and Need, who came begging at the door. Resource sank into a deep sleep and Need used the opportunity to bring him to the bed of Love. Eros was born; his conduct becoming the embodiment of the curious gathering of the opposites:

> Then again, as the son of Resource and Need, it has been his fate to be always needy; nor is he delicate and lovely as most of us believe, but harsh and arid, barefoot and homeless, sleeping on the naked earth, in doorways, or in the very streets beneath the stars of heaven, and always partaking of his mother's poverty. But, secondly, he brings his father's resourcefulness to his designs upon the beautiful and the good, for he is gallant, impetuous, and energetic, a mighty hunter, and master of device and artifice—at once desirous and full of wisdom, a lifelong seeker after truth, an adept in sorcery, enchantment, and seduction. He is neither mortal nor immortal, for in the space of a day he will be now, when all goes well with him, alive and blooming, and now dying, to be born again by virtue of his father's nature, while what he gains will always ebb away as fast. So Love is never altogether in or out of need, and stands, moreover, midway between ignorance and wisdom.[630]

Plato's description of Eros as standing midway between opposites might be misleading if Eros' position is reflected upon in static terms. Eros' position is characterized by constant shifting or fluctuation. What keeps Eros shifting between opposite states is that the two opposite states are not outside but rather *within* him. Hence, Eros is not differentiated from and, in a sense, is identical to the two opposite states between which he fluctuates. Consequently, the very identity or definition of Eros turns out to be identical to the constant fluctuation from one state to another. The very definition of Love indicates the impossibility of its rational definition.

2b. Ibn al-'Arabī

Ibn al-'Arabī views the paradoxicality that is involved in the liminal definition of love through a certain dialectic that holds between the natural and the spiritual aspects of reality. True lovers activate this dialectic by

combining natural and spiritual love. Natural love is the love that seeks to fulfill its (selfish) needs whether this pleases the beloved or not. Spiritual love is the love that seeks to please the beloved so that the lover rules according to what is required from him, thus abandoning his selfish interests and his very will to his beloved. Ibn al-'Arabī says that it is one of the attributes of Love that the lover brings together the opposites.[631] But he makes it clear that not every lover is capable of this. The natural lover does not bring together natural and spiritual love, since all he cares about is fulfilling his natural needs. Only true, or, divine lovers bring together the opposites. And they do this by becoming the locus of a paradox. Ibn al-'Arabī describes this paradox, which I will entitle "the paradox of the lover," as follows:

> The description of the bringing together of the opposites is the following. One of the necessary attributes of Love is that the lover must love to be connected with his beloved. Another necessary attribute of Love is that the lover loves whatever the beloved loves. Now what if the beloved loves disconnection? If the lover loves disconnection he will not be doing what is necessary for Love, that is, connection. If, however, he loves connection then he will not be doing what is necessary for Love, since then he will not love whatever the beloved loves, that is, disconnection. The lover is protested against (*majūj*) in both situations. [632]

The lover is protested against no matter which option he follows. He is described by bewilderment and straying from the way and is contrasted to the possessor of rational determination, whose rational determination holds him together and binds him to one direction rather than another.[633] This seems to be a negative characterization, as it is responsible for such descriptions of lovers as being blind and detached from reality. As we are going to see, however, Ibn al-'Arabī' turns this negative characterization into a positive one by concentrating on a radically different sort of reality.

3. The Purpose of Love

3a. Plato

Diotima explains to Socrates that gods do not seek wisdom, since the wise does not seek what is already his. Nor do the ignorant seek wisdom. Absolutely lacking in beauty, goodness, and intelligence the ignorant is not stirred by their absence. The seekers after truth, therefore, come between the wise and the ignorant, and one of them is Love. They are halfway between

the mortal and the immortal, man and god and, as such, they perform a most important task:

> They are the envoys and the interpreters that ply between heaven and earth . . . and since they are between the two estates they weld both sides together and merge them into one great whole . . . For the divine will not mingle with the human, and it is only through the mediation of the spirit world that man can have any intercourse, whether waking or sleeping, with the gods. And the man who is versed in such matters is said to have spiritual powers, as opposed to the mechanical powers of the man who is expert in the more mundane arts. There are many spirits, and many kinds of spirits, too, and Love is one of them. [634]

Love is one of the spirits that bridge the gap between god and the world. Diotima considers the work of mediation that Love performs to be an ideal that the human being must strive to aspire to. Consequently, the mission of lovers—to—be becomes to imitate the form of the activity of mediation of Love. The purpose of this activity is to arrive at the knowledge of the beauty of wholeness. Diotima elaborates on the procedure that the candidate for the initiation in Love must follow. I will summarize her account of this procedure in the following steps:

1. The candidate turns his attention from the love for the beauties of (many) bodies to the love of the beauty of an individual body.
2. The candidate turns his attention from the beauty of individual bodies to the loveliness of the Form that is common to all beautiful bodies.
3. The candidate turns his attention from natural love and all that is related to it to the love of the soul, so that he discovers spiritual loveliness "even in the husk of an unlovely body".
4. The candidate turns his attention to the beauty of institutions, laws and sciences "so that he may know the beauty of every kind of knowledge".
5. The candidate turns his attention from the beauty of the many forms of knowledge and the sciences to the "one single form of knowledge, which is the knowledge of beauty."[635]

When the candidate for the initiation of Love has arrived at the knowledge of beauty his vision of the beautiful will be one of oneness and wholeness:

> Nor will his vision of the beautiful take the form of a face, or of hands, or of anything that is of the flesh. It will be neither words, nor knowledge, nor a something that exists in something else, such as a living creature, or the earth, or the heavens, or anything *that is*—but subsisting of itself and by itself in an eternal oneness, while every lovely thing partakes of it in such sort that, however much the parts may wax and wane, it will be neither more nor less, but still the same inviolable whole. (*emphasis added*) [636]

Diotima's description of the state of the lover at this point seems to be considerably different from her characterization of him as a person who is torn apart between opposite states, constantly fluctuating and changing color. It seems that the lover has transcended the state of instability to a state of stillness and tranquility. He is no longer searching for god; he is dwelling now in his presence. The lover has mounted "the heavenly ladder, stepping from rung to rung . . . until at last he comes to know what beauty is,"[637] and has become a possessor of wisdom rather than a seeker for it. Should we say then that he has transcended the state of Love and that he is no longer a lover? The answer to this question is to be found in the *Republic* in which there is waiting for the lover or the seeker for wisdom another mission that is not less, if not more, difficult than ascending the ladder to oneness. The lover, who has possessed knowledge of oneness, is forced to descend the same ladder that he ascended in the process of learning how from the One comes the many. As his way up was full of pain and suffering, due to the uncertainty that colored his unstable state, so is his way down is full of confusion and bewilderment, due to the same uncertainty that colors his new state. The difference, however, between the two states is that the uncertainty that characterizes the state of descending is joined with knowledge of truth while the uncertainty that characterizes the state of ascent seems to be devoid of it. The lover is still a lover and is still behaving like one; it is only that he has become a *true* lover of wisdom.

3b. Ibn al-'Arabī

In elaborating on the purpose of love, Ibn al-'Arabī tells the story of the journey of the human soul from a state of 'animality' to a state of perfection, from a state of natural selfishness to a state of divine unity. The journey begins when the soul finding herself in charge of a corporeal body. She conducts her affairs in a manner that accords with her natural needs. Totally occupied with the fulfillment of her natural concerns, she forgets about a certain Covenant with her Lord, according to which she belongs

entirely to Him and to Him alone. Then, the rational faculty comes to the scene and demonstrates to the soul that she possesses only a contingent nature and that there must exist a Maker who is necessary-of-existence to provide for the possibility or the continuity of her existence. Next, a person appears and claims that he is a messenger sent by Him who made her. Her immediate response is to ask the messenger for a rational proof to the effect that he is telling the truth. He introduces his proof, which persuades the soul of the necessity of believing in her Maker. Her belief, however, is mixed with love for the Maker, desire for fulfilling her natural needs, and fear that her needs may interfere with her obedience for Him. The following description that Ibn al-'Arabī provides for the soul's struggle is important because it presents his special account of the human struggle to arrive at perfection in knowledge:

> She joined in her worship between two affairs, her worship for Him and her worship that is based on fear and desire. She loved Him for Himself in respect of her spiritual configuration, and she loved Him for her own self in respect of her natural configuration. Her fear and desire pertained to her natural configuration, while her worship for Him, which was based on love, pertained to her spiritual configuration. When she came to love a certain entity, other than Him, she loved that entity out of her spiritual inclination to Him, and also out of her natural desire to meet a certain [selfish] concern. The Real saw her condition and knew the fact that she was divided in herself and in her joining between two kinds of love. The Real has described Himself by jealousy, and disliked to be associated with. He wanted her to be devoted to Him entirely and to love none other than Him. Hence, He revealed Himself to her in a natural form and gave her a mark that she could not deny. This mark bestowed on her necessary knowledge. Thus she came to know that He is identical with the natural form in which He disclosed Himself. This [recognition] made her incline to Him both naturally and spiritually. Then, once He gained full possession of her and knew that due to her natural configuration she could have been affected by her relations with certain affairs *(asbāb)* He gave her a sign by which she would recognize Him in all matters. Hence, she knew Him, and loved the affairs for His sake and not for her own. Then she became His in her entirety, not due to some

> natural inclination or for any other reason apart from Him. She saw Him in all things and she shone and rejoiced and realized that she was privileged over other souls with the possession of this truth. Then He revealed Himself to her in her natural and spiritual configurations with that same mark, and she came to realize that she had seen Him only through Himself not through herself and that she loved Him only through Him, not through herself, since in reality He was the one who loved Himself. Then she looked at Him in every existent entity with that same 'eye of recognition,' and knew that no other loved Him but Himself, since He was the lover and the beloved, the seeker and what is sought. [638]

This is a description of the human journey towards perfection. The Perfect Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) begins his journey in the state of animality, in which state the fulfillment of his natural needs constitutes the sole object of his Love. Rational reflection, combined with religious belief, prepares the soul of Man for a state of spirituality. This state of spirituality, however, is based on the sort of love that is mixed with fear and desire. Man begins a process the purpose of which is to purify his Love from the elements that disturb its purity and attain a state of pure or unmixed worship. Man can obtain this state only when he reaches a stage in which he combines natural love, which is identical to the manifest aspect of reality, and spiritual love, which is identical to the nonmanifest aspect of reality. That is, Man attains a state of perfection when he has become a divine medium between the natural (manifest) and the spiritual (nonmanifest) aspects of reality. As such, he will have attained a state of perfection and become a Limit (*barzakh*) [639] between the Real (God as the nonmanifest) and His creation (God as the manifest):

> The perfect human being brings together the form of the Real and the form of the cosmos. He is a barzakh between the Real and the cosmos, a raised-up mirror. The Real sees His form in the mirror of the human being, and creation also sees its form in him. He who gains this level has gained a level of perfection more perfect than which nothing is found in possibility.[640]

The perfect Man has arrived at the highest level of perfection. Does this mean that he has exhausted all the possibilities of love or that he has ended his love journey? The answer is no. The state of love can never come

to an end because love is identical to the lover and cannot be separated from him:

> Our purpose from loving Him is to know the truth of our Love. Is it a psychological attribute or an attribute of the lover pertaining to a certain meaning (*ma'nawī*) that is attached to him? Or is it a relation between the lover and the beloved, a connection that attracts the lover to connection with the beloved? We say: it is a psychological attribute. If it is said: we witness its vanishing, we say that it is impossible for it to cease to exist unless the lover ceases to exist. But the lover never ceases to exist and, therefore, Love never ceases to exist. Hence, Love is identical to the lover and is not anything other than the lover's entity, not a description of a certain meaning that is attached to him, which could be removed and with its removal its ruling property could removed as well. [641]

Ibn al-'Arabī arrives at the same conclusion that Plato arrives at in *Symposium*: philosophy is the philosopher. This conclusion can bear significant implications on our treatment of the very purpose of philosophy or philosophizing. For, following this conclusion, we have to shift our attention from seeking some philosophical truth, which is the outcome of the philosopher's eternal search for the ultimate object of love, to the search for the human being or the philosopher who is its author.[642] Our search must be for the human being rather than some meaning that is attached to him, to use Ibn al-'Arabī's words,[643] or some knowledge that is the outcome of his search endeavor, to use Plato's words. [644] It is here that Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī begin to sound like existentialists. However, Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī do not see the roots of Man in *this* existence. On the contrary, they see it in the endless endeavor at transcending (limited) existence. This act of transcendence secures a very important aim. It prevents philosophy from becoming religion.[645]

4. Vlastos' Criticism of the Platonic Theory of Love

In "The Definition of Love in Plato's Symposium," Donald Levy brings Gregory Vlastos' criticism to Plato's theory of love and suggests an answer to the criticism. Vlastos' main objection is that in Plato's theory what we love in persons is not the persons themselves but only their being examples of the idea of absolute beauty, an abstract entity. Levy points out that, according to Vlastos, the defect in Plato's definition of love can be discerned by contrasting

the Platonic definition with Aristotle's: "Love is wishing good things for someone for that person's sake." [646]Levy mentions a number of flaws in Vlastos' criticism. But the most important of them and the one that is relevant to Ibn al-'Arabī's theory of love is the following. According to Plato, Loving a person for the sake of absolute beauty does not necessarily imply that that person cannot be loved for himself. For example, if we use Thomas Jefferson as an example of a great president, this does not mean that we do not truly admire *him*. More importantly, Platonic love can be considered an *imaginative process* in which the lover can 'use' people as examples of absolute beauty and, at the same time, love them for themselves. Levy elaborates:

> Besides, when Diotima speaks of using examples of beauty, she is speaking of those who seek to be initiated into love's mysteries, who seek to learn what love really is. For that, a person must understand absolute beauty, and to achieve that, one must use the objects of one's love as examples, *images* of absolute beauty. In saying these things, Diotima seems to be thinking of a quite distinctive *imaginative process*—one people might engage in without being obliged to treat the objects of their affections merely as examples of something else. Certainly, a person might engage in such activity without necessarily believing that all anyone is ever really doing in loving is using the objects of love as examples of something else, or that using the objects of love as examples of something else is all that we ought to do with them. (*emphasis added*) [647]

Platonic love can be looked at as an imaginative process, a process in which a person might be engaged in loving objects without necessarily believing that all he is doing is using the objects of his love as mere examples. Levy does not elaborate on this imaginative process, or, on the status of love's objects as images. In my view, Ibn al-'Arabī's unique treatment of imagination might assist us in providing an explanation for the possibility of the Platonic love. I must make it explicit, however, that what I am going to bring here from Ibn al-'Arabī's theory of imagination is only a simplified account of a very complicated theory that is spread over hundreds of pages of his work.[648] I will first cite Ibn al-'Arabī's characterization of the ontological status of images and then elaborate on its connection with the subject under discussion:

> If you possess the power of reasoning and you perceive the image [in the mirror] you realize that you have perceived an

> affair of existence, on which your sight has fallen. But you immediately know, with manifest certainty, that originally there was nothing there to be witnessed. Then what is the thing for which you have affirmed entified being, and that you negated even in the very state of affirming it? Imagination is neither existent nor non-existent, neither known nor unknown, neither affirmed nor negated. A person who sees his image in the mirror knows decisively that he has perceived his form in some respect and that he has not perceived his form in some other respect. Then if he says: 'I saw my form I did not see my form,' he will be neither a truth teller nor a liar. What is then the truth of the perceived form? The form is negated and affirmed, existent and non-existent, known and unknown. God manifested this truth to the servant as a *sign* so that he realizes that once he has become incapable of recognizing the truth of this affair [the truth of the liminal nature of the image], although it is an affair of this world, then he knows that he is even more incapable in relation to the knowledge of its Creator. [649]

The image signifies a liminal reality. Its existence can neither be affirmed nor negated. Its truth can neither be known nor unknown. This characterization of the ontological status of the image in relation to our epistemological attitude toward it seem to designate an extreme skeptical position, one that adheres to indefinability and absolute uncertainty. However, Ibn al—'Arabī's differs from the skeptical position in holding that it is particularly because of its unique indefinability that the image can function as a sign that *points at* a higher truth. The uncertainty that characterizes the ontological status of the image is not a defect in its definition. On the contrary, it is what enables it to *represent* a higher form of truth, or, enables us to conceive the possibility of a higher truth through such a representation.[650] Likewise, defining love by treating the ontological status of the loved person, who might be seen as an image that *points at* the Form of beauty, in terms of indefinability does not render the definition of love defective. Rather, the imaginal process that is involved in the liminal definition of love lifts the ontological status of the beloved to the level of love itself.

In my view, this is what we learn from Ibn al—'Arabī's account of the most important love story in the Arabic tradition, the love of "Qays the Mad" to Laylā.[651] According to Ibn al-'Arabī's account, Laylā came to Qays when he was calling her name and taking the ice and throwing

it on his chest. The ice was melting because of the heat of his heart. She said to him: "I am what you seek, your object of desire, your beloved and darling. I am Laylā." He turned to her and said: "Away with you! Your love has distracted me from you."[652] Ibn al-'Arabī's description of this incident that took place, according to him, between the two lovers seems to confirm Vlastos' view that the sort of spiritual love involved here minimizes the status of the lover to nothingness. However, Ibn al—'Arabī's explanation of the incident might provide for a different interpretation, one that brings us back to Levy's characterization to love as an imaginative process:

> A group of us looked at the Form, which is in the Imagination, of the existent in which the beloved appears. [The companion of this group] contemplates the existence of his beloved, as this contemplation consists of connecting with the beloved in Imagination. Thus, he sees the beloved as connected to his imagination by a connection that is subtler than the connection that pertains to the entity of the beloved in the outside existence. This is what kept Qays distracted from **Laylā's** presence when she approached him from the outside. He said to her: "Away with you!." He did not want the density of the perceptible **Laylā** to prevent him from this subtle imaginal contemplation, since **Laylā** was in his imagination subtler than she was in her [perceptible] entity and also more beautiful. This is the description of the subtlest type of love, and the companion of this description is always blessed, since he never complains from separation. [653]

The love story that took place between Qays and Laylā and that ended in the death of the two lovers, is not only tragic but can be considered also paradoxical. In the incident mentioned above, Qays refused to connect with Laylā although she was the only thing in the world that he was seeking. He roamed about the dessert looking for Laylā and when he finally had the opportunity to be with her he refused it.[654] It is madly paradoxical to refuse *to be* with a person that you are *looking for*, which is the same as to continue to seek to be with a person who is with you. There seems to be no rational explanation for this behavior, [655]and a Vlastos seems to be justified in denying that Qays was in love *with* Laylā. However, the story of Qays and Laylā is considered in the Arabic tradition as the example of true love and, in order to understand the mind of the creator of this story, we must find some explanation for the strange behavior of the lovers rather than simply discard their it as illogical. It turns out that the needed explanation

is based on considering a dimension of the human intellectual activity that is to be distinguished from the rational dimension. It is the dimension that Ibn al-'Arabī identifies as Imagination.[656] Qays' intention was not to merely connect with Laylā, but rather to connect with her permanently. But he thought that he could not possibly connect with Laylā permanently had this connection been attached to her corporeal entity, or, as Ibn al-'Arabī says, in the "outside existence". Qays knew that one day that entity would vanish and he could not bear the idea that his love would vanish with it. That is why he connected the person of his beloved to the Imaginal Form of Laylā. Contrary to Vlastos, Ibn al-'Arabī would say not only that Qays loved Laylā for her own person, but that he loved her person so much that he could not limit it to some corporeal form. For, this would break the continuity or the permanence of his love, as the limitedness of the corporeal form would break the continuity or the permanence of the personality of the beloved person. Following Ibn al-'Arabī's interpretation, the difference between Plato and Vlastos' definition of love would boil down to a difference in the definition of what constitutes a person. According to Ibn al-'Arabī, the person's identity cannot be identified only, or, exclusively with this or that formal state, but rather with the Fixed Entity, the person's fixed and unchangeable Form. From Ibn al-'Arabī's standpoint, Vlastos', or, Aristotle's definition of love is not incorrect it is only incomplete as it attaches itself to a limited, or, existent manifestation of the Nonexistent Form of the beloved person.

Satori, Enlightenment and *'Irfan*: A Reflection on the Question of Individual Realization

Seyed Javad Miri
University of Bristol, UK

Abstract

One of the most perplexing ideas within philosophy, theology, human sciences and mysticism discourses is the question of 'Self' and its realization. There are many contrasting views within universal history of intellectual concerns about what it really means to realize the 'Self'. Is there any hidden nucleus within the shell of human soul that needs to be extracted through ascesis or modern formal education is capable of cultivating the equilibrium within the heart of modern man? In this article the question of individual realization as a conscious process of anti-alienation is under investigation by comparing three distinct paradigms of 'Individual Realization' in relation to Satori (Buddhist Tradition), Enlightenment (Modern Tradition) and 'Irfan (Islamic Tradition) by concluding that the realm of realization within the parameters of self is of transcendental nature that trespasses the myopic fetters of naturalistic constraints.

Introduction

There is no doubt that the catchword within the Liberal tradition in regard to the human self is 'Education'. The importance of education is so paradigmatic within the Liberalism that some of its proponents claimed God makes Man and Education makes him a Gentleman. In other words, there is a specific conception of education that is embedded within Liberal Tradition that takes the divine creation in the person of Man and brings out the potentialities to a higher stage of dynamism. What is a gentleman?

There are two answers for this question; one is of a historical-social character and the other one is of a philosophical nature. The former is historically associated with a man of gentle birth, who was entitled to bear arms, ranking above a yeoman in terms of social class and hierarchy. In this sense the idea of Gentleness, which is a universal and a divine grace to the Mankind was hijacked by a minority in order to serve their ill-purposes and perpetuate their family position within economic aristocracy system, which is a distorted reflection of spiritual aristocracy based on personal and spiritual achievements. In the second sense, which is closer to the spirit and letter of Liberal Tradition, the idea of gentleness is closely related to a philosophical conception of human existence. The anthropological philosophy which lies at the bottom of this understanding is related to the dual equation of Nature and Nurture. The first one is divine and the sum of all potentialities which are collected and embedded within the Image of God in the person of Primordial Man and the second pair is what one calls culture. By culture one intends in the liberal tradition a process, which attempts to refine and bring out the good qualities embedded in the human nature and at the same time remove, so to speak, the 'weed' from the garden of personality. This metaphor brings to mind the idea of garden in an agricultural context and it is not very farfetched to think in this sense in relation to Liberal notion of education either. The image of human existence and how to bring the good qualities out from the human soil is similar to the art of gardening and as the result for a perfect gardening is a garden full of beautiful flowers without any weeds, the result of good education should be the realization of gentleness. What is the meaning of gentleness within the liberal anthropological philosophy? The liberal philosophy, unlike the radical Enlightenment anthropology, does not assume that human nature is the repository of all virtues in need of Rousseauian methodology to bring out the Emilian personality out to the open nature. The liberal notion of education is based on the assumption that Man is a repository of vices and virtues and the role of society is not to be conceived as all-inducing and all-powerful demiurge that draws all it wishes on the Tabula Rasa of man's nature. Hence the idea of 'Educator' as a 'Gardner' made in the image of a. 'Cultivator' is born within Liberalism. The whole process of education and the fundamental elements of upbringing are related to the idea of 'Cultivation' and as the gardener is in need of a pair of scissors to cut the weeds and let the flowers and grass grow into a proportionate form, the educator needs to have at its disposal a conceptual tools to cut the vices and facilitate the growth of virtues in the person of Man. This process of cutting the weeds of vice and facilitating the growth of flowers of virtue is called education and would lead to Gentleness or, to use a philosophical term, Moderation and, to use a religious term, Nobility of Soul. Unlike the

notion of Enlightenment that was endorsed by French radicals and would not in any sensible and intelligible way lead to 'Light', the Liberal notion of education is what one may term as a process towards removing of the clouds of ignorance that ultimately would allow the Man to see the Sun of Light within his own Garden based on an incessant and tireless process of cultivation. The idea of cultivation is not to be confused by the idea of modern notion of 'culture', where the solemn ideals of 'proportion', 'wholeness', 'beauty', and 'geometry' are alien notions and irrelevant for anybody who is interested in cultural activities within modern context. Within Liberal Tradition, the idea of education is to be resembled with the art of Gardening or the primitive farming, where the whole attempt was to find the 'right position' for each and every seed and flower in the garden or the farm. In this tradition, the education is to man what farming is to the wild land and the end result is Gentlemanliness. The pristine meaning of gentleness is to be 'Noble' and the term in the philosophical tradition is not fundamentally different than having 'high moral qualities' and being 'magnanimous in deed'. To be magnanimous within Liberalism in its religious aspect is not different and could not be even fathomed without education and the latter is not even conceivable without having 'Knowledge' of 'First principles' and intellectual contemplation. In other words, one finds out that to be noble is not to belong to a privileged social or political class whose status is usually indicated by a title conferred by sovereign authority or descent. On the contrary, to be noble means to be capable of knowing, to use Erich Fromm's maxim, the art of truthful living and finally it should come as a surprise to notice that the primordial meaning of 'nobility' has nothing to do with social class or political affiliation, though they may have historically hijacked it socio-politically, but with *noscere*, namely 'Knowledge'. In Liberal tradition what leads to nobility is education and that is Light and enlightening due to the fact that it leads the student to find out about his true nature and the real nature of virtues and vices within his own self. The noble man is man in the Image of God and education brings him towards this state of being and this *is* realization of knowledge or noscere and nobility. This conception is not fundamentally distinct from the idea of illumination and knowledge in Islamic philosophy of 'Irfan and is essentially related to the notion of Satori in Zen Buddhism.

The Light and Gnostic Tradition of 'Irfan

'Irfan; the term itself means 'recognition' or 'acquaintance'. At the heart of this term there is an idea, which is essentially interconnected with the reality of the process that is assumedly leading towards 'Irfan, namely the notion of 'cognition'. Within the modern paradigm of knowledge[657] when one

thinks of 'Knowledge' one does think of it in a very institutional sense and it is hard not to forget the realisational dimensions of knowledge-pursuit.[658] What are the realisational dimensions of knowledge-pursuit?

The modern concept of knowledge is substantially based on a socialized understanding of knowledge-pursuit. That is to argue that the epistemological basis of modern education is premised upon the idea of utility for collective conscience and the institutions which are materialized expressions of the will of society. The concept of utility is not as negative as some critics may argue but it contains many vast fields of human existence both individually and collectively and moreover it is not totally alien to the idea of religiosity as such. By 'utility' within modern episteme one intends to convey the idea of 'usefulness' in practical terms but the terms of practice are not all determined by the philosophy of 'Utilitarianism' in its crude instrumentalist sense. On the contrary, the concept of usefulness and the terms of praxis are of a higher and more subtle level, which are best expressed by the radical school of Pragmatism in American tradition of philosophy by men such as C. S. Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and Herbert Mead. The nub of their philosophy, which constitutes the substantial elements of the idea of 'Utility' is *the capacity to cope with life*. A true education should give one a useful tool to cope with existential ups and downs of life and the utility of the education could be measured at the stage of life once one enters into the battleground and the meaning of measurement is not what quantitatively-inclined educators endorse. By measurement is intended the extent and degree one has traversed upon the map of life and overcome its de-centralizing forces upon individuality and nobility. But these latter aspects have al but disappeared from early modern education which was an extension of liberal tradition and the second phase of modernity that is concomitant with the reign of quantity and now with the third phase of modernity upon us, where the commercialisation is the reigning philosophy, there is not much to be said in terms of 'Realization' and 'Knowledge-pursuit' within modern frame of philosophy.

On the contrary, the ideas of education and 'Irfan are both of the same roots, where the seeker of gnosis is a student who aspires to be educated in its primordial sense. That is to say, the idea of cognition is not what one intends within institutional and socialized context of modern education based on 'Utility-index'. First of all, the term 'cognition' is not referring solely to traditional conception of science, where it separates the observer from the observed and encircles the ultimate goal of science in knowing in a rational sense, which is independent of the observer. The kind of knowledge which would be powerful enough to enable us to realise the tenets of essential truths within the realm of primordial self is fundamentally related to 'consciousness' or the subject's experiencing of the object. In

other words, the observer cannot be separated from the observed, for it is precisely their relationship that is relevant for realization within the paradigm of 'Irfan. When it is admitted that the point of reference in cognitive approach is not solely the mental process by which the subject acquires knowledge within physical parameters of phenomenal reality, then the scope of cognition is enlarged enough to embrace 'perception', 'intuition', 'reasoning', 'intellection', 'inspiration', and 'revelation'. Once the parameters of cognition is redesigned in this fashion, one would realize that this is not very far from the Liberal idea of education, which seeks to bring out the noble nature of man into the light based on 'noscere' and this is the primordial meaning of 'cognition', namely knowledge. In other words, 'Irfan is the educational process whereby Man attempts to rescue the soul from falling into the realm of vices and losing the capability to be-come realized as the divine image in its primordial sense. How to achieve this is what 'Irfan attempts to impart to those who seek 'cognition', namely by an individual approach to the realm of Truth. One must stop thinking in terms of collective, social, political, and so on and so forth. The realm of Trut' is as communal as it is individual. The Face of God is as Universal as it i Personal and the uniqueness of divinity is beyond rational cognition but it is within the realm of *re-cognition* or attainable once Man embarks upon the path of enlightenment and realization of nobility in one's self.

Within the formal institution of knowledge, unlike the Liberal Tradition (despite of what many today wrongly thinks of contemporary education as an expression of Liberal Education) and the Tradition of 'Irfan, the pursuit is primarily concerned with the physical dimensions of reality and normal states of awareness. The complex edifice of reality is always understood within the parameters of *unintentionality*. That is to argue that the subject's experiencing of the object, which Brentano and Husserl deemed fundamental to phenomenological understanding of reality, is neglected and consequently the complete knowledge of the structure of phenomenal worlds is lost and phenomenal world is wrongly equated with physical (sense data) world. Or whatever that appears to the sight in its myopic sense is called reality and the vast phenomena that appears in consciousness, including perceptions, imagination, thoughts, recollections, intellection, noble dreams, and so on and so forth are omitted from the domain of cognition, which ultimately would lead to the eschewal of the very realisational dimension of knowledge within modern education. The disappearance of this aspect from knowledge-pursuit is not a formal loss, which could be rectified, in an institutional sense but it is a spiritual poverty in its very fundamental sense, namely manslaughter at best or murder at worst.

When one talks of 'Irfan within Sacred tradition of Islam, one thinks of 'Gnosis' and by that one intends a very specific notion of knowledge, which

embrace the entire gamut of man's existential faculties and the individual attempt based on devotion to the realization of noble man. Within the parameter of 'Irfan, the pursuit of knowledge is not confined to what one acquires formally and rationally. On the contrary, the pursuit of knowledge is exactly the rendering of fundamental meaning of 'pursuit' in its essential sense, namely to follow incessantly after the ray to its source of origin. This is called by Gnostics 'knowledge by presence' and the beam of light when ignited within the darkness of man's seventh solitude gives rise to a qualitatively different kind of individuality, i.e. 'Arif or the Enlightened One. The aim of education when is taken in its existential sense is not the impartation of disconnected or domain-connected knowledge but a holistic sense of *outlook* based on an experiential knowledge that results in an individuated self or a noble man. This is to view life and whatever it offers in a very existential sense and it is an attempt on behalf of Man to confront life fully and in all fronts and levels of being by avoiding to determine the nature of reality *a priori* without travelling through.

Satori and Enlightenment

Satori is the heart of Zen; an Awakening or Enlightenment. It is the Awakening to one's Original Face and Primordial Nature, to the ultimate reality of all.[659] It is an Awakening of the Heart flowering into endless compassion for all beings. Almost all Buddhist sects can be called religions. There are many sects in Buddhism, but the core or essence of them all is the experience called Satori or self-realization. The theories and philosophies of all the sects are but the clothing covering the core. These outer wrappings are of various shapes and colours, but what is inside remains the same. And the core, this experience, is not adorned with any thought or philosophy. It is merely a fact, an experienced fact, in the same way that the taste of tea is a fact. A cup of tea has no thought, no idea, no philosophy. It tastes the same to Buddhists as it does to anybody else. There is no difference at all.

One may ask what makes this experience happen. Well, quite simply, it is when certain conditions are present to the consciousness of a human being, and a reaction occurs. This reaction is called the Zen experience. The reaction of this experience is always the same, regardless of the beliefs we may hold or the colour of our skin. It could be compared to playing billiards. When we hit the balls with the same amount of power and in the same direction, all the balls roll along the same course and at the same angles, regardless of their colour.

Now one may wonder, what are the conditions that bring our consciousness to the experience. It is to concentrate with our mind in one-pointedness, and to forget ourselves in it. The one-pointedness is achieved sometimes in

breath-counting, sometimes in what we call 'following the breath', sometimes just sitting, and sometimes working on koans. You will notice that all these ways point inwardly. It is a very interesting fact, but when we concentrate on an object outside ourselves, for example as in archery where we aim at a target, no matter how strong the concentration may be, we cannot attain the Zen experience. So in Zen practice, when we want to attain Satori, we have to be absorbed inwardly.

Here one must remember that the experience attained by Zazen practice is not a thought or a philosophy or a religion, but merely a fact, an existential happening. And strange as it may seem, the experience of that fact has the power to free us from the agonies of the pains of the world. It emancipates us from the anxiety of all worldly sufferings. No one knows why that experience has such wonderful power, but it does. This is the most important point, and it's the most difficult to try to explain by a linguistic frame of knowledge which is not based on existential findings.

In the Zen experience, a certain unity happens, subject and object become one and we come to realize our own self-nature in its primordial sense. This self-nature cannot be seen, it cannot be touched, it cannot be heard. Because of these characteristics, one refers to is an 'empty' (in Japanese, ku) but its activities are infinite. So, one says the Zen experience is the realization of the empty-infinite of one's self-nature or one's essential-nature, as it is often called. When this happens, the fact is accompanied by a great peace of mind and tranquillity will reign supreme. At that moment, one feels as though the heavy burdens one has been carrying in the heart or on one's shoulders, indeed all over the body and soul, suddenly disappear as if thrown away. The joy and happiness at that time is beyond all words. This is called Satori, or self-realization, or enlightenment.

What is one going to attain by doing Zazen? There are three categories:

1. Developing concentration of the mind.
2. Satori-awakening, enlightenment.
3. Personalization of Satori.

The first, to develop concentration is of utmost importance in establishing and maintaining a successful life in this world. The ability to concentrate calms the surface of our consciousness. This is most necessary in making correct decisions, and for receiving external impressions and information the right way. Also, when the mind is deeply absorbed, it does not easily yield to the influence of external circumstances. And, moreover, when we want to actualise ideas, which arise in our heart, or when we want to accomplish some work or business, a strong concentration of mind is indispensable.

The second, Satori, is the most important to a Mahayana Zen Buddhist. Dogen Zenji, the great Zen master who brought Soto Zen to Japan, has clearly stated that without enlightenment there is no Zen. This Satori does not happen necessarily by mere concentration. This is especially true, if the mind is brought to one-pointedness in the objective world. And even if this is achieved inwardly our life problem, the problem of life and death, cannot be solved fundamentally by concentration. It can only be resolved by enlightenment and the personalization of that magnanimous experience. So if one wants to free oneself from the anxiety of the sufferings of life through Zazen, the Satori experience should be the main purpose for practicing Zazen.

The third aim of Zazen, the personalization or embodiment of Satori, comes as a matter of course only after having attained Satori. This is the nub of education in realisational aspect. To attain this experience of enlightenment in order to accomplish our ultimate personality is very difficult indeed, and requires an extremely long period of time. The experience itself is only the entrance. The completion is to personalize what we came to realize in the experience. After washing away all the ecstasy and glitter in the experience, the truly great Zen person is not distinguishable in outward appearance. He is a man who has experienced deep enlightenment and consequently extinguished all illusions, but is still not different externally from an ordinary man. Through Satori and Zazen, one would be-come an integrated person. Enlightenment is the goal of Zen Buddhism. One can understand enlightenment as knowledge of the truth; but this knowledge is not the accumulative and rational knowledge as one comprehends within secular paradigm. Satori, however, is a form of enlightenment, which is at the bottom of realized notion of education. A monk went to the Zen master wanting to know more about the truth of enlightenment. When he asked this question of the Zen master, the master replied, "Do you hear the sound of that running brook." Yes, I hear it," answered the monk. "That is the entrance to the truth" the Master replied to him.

When the beam of light has been ignited within the heart and the rays of Light realized within the realm of primordial self, the birth of noble man is not very far off. This is what Satori is about in its permanent sense and this is the true aim of education within Buddhist tradition.[660]

The Realisation and Alienation of the Self

The very term of 'Individual' is metaphysically possible if there are, at least, two fundamental realities present. One is the idea of 'Freedom' and the second one is the idea of 'Conscience'. The entire edifice of individuality boils down to these very two significant aspects without the birth of an individual would be inconceivable if not impossible. Regardless of the tradition one

adheres (the school of Satori, the school of 'Irfan, or the school of Liberalism) it is not possible to think of the birth or the death of individuality without consolidating the metaphysical importance of freedom and conscience within the realm of Self. Otherwise one would pave the way for the entrance of a mechanistic notion of self, which could do without either, and the result is 'socialization' (in the place of conscience) and 'hedonism' (in the place of liberty). There are many definitions of 'conscience' within secular thought but to cut a long story short it would not be inappropriate to classify the mainstream ones as a refined derivation from the concept of socialization within modern socio-cosmogony. Within this school of thought (popularly considered as the Modern Paradigm), there is no inherent capacity within human self (such as soul or conscientious cordial seat) that could rise above particularities and point out towards universal Good, Beauty, Love, and Care beyond the relational contingencies. The human self born and bred within this paradigm is nothing but a particular expression of the grandeur 'Collective Conscience' that permeates like the almighty goddess within all corners of human psyche and socius.[661] It is hard not to wonder then how spiritual innovations, poetical voyage of discoveries, grandeur visions of art, sublime schemes of architecture, sorrowful sonnets, doleful songs, heart-touching stories and many others aspects, which breath life into our universe come about?

Within the modern socio-cosmogonical paradigm the liberty of self is measured by reference to the scope of its external expressions and the length of the sustenance of such sporadic (and mainly free of moral-ethical considerations) events that crystallize the very content of self-expressions. That is to argue that the reality where the self is moving within is not an expression of Intelligible Brahman but a construction accumulated by haphazard mobility of a blind evolutionary process. This is to deny that the physical universe is only a 'container' of meaningfully expressed 'contained' realities that fall under a hierarchy of intelligible orders and responsive to both the 'container' and the 'contained'. Within this scheme of thought, then, the question of self and its realization or self and its alienation are not similar to what the proponents of socialization have so far argued by denying a) the intelligibility of Reality, b) the necessity and existence of intelligible soul within each self as conscience, and c) the relation between liberty and conscience as the 'inner voice'.

When the conscience as 'inner voice' is premised as an inevitable source of self-realization and the individual heed to this voice as the first necessary step towards expression of liberty, then it is not farfetched to see the ontological absence of each of these as powerful expressions of self-alienation.[662] It would be careless of the author to assume that the concepts of 'self' and 'alienation' are very recent innovations within contemporary thought and moreover

to deny the fierce modern debates on how to rectify the illness caused by alienation of human self. Needless to mention that modern secular thinkers do admit that alienation is as real as rain in the spring and its prevalence as detrimental as the spread of poison within human physical body. However what is of disagreement is not the reality of an individual dimension called 'self' or even the powerful dis-ease, which might cause the self to be paralysed, namely 'alienation'. None of these are at risk or there is no theoretical need to defend and prove that these are real and not fictional problems. In other words, there are many points of agreements between secular school of thought and religious school of thought in terms of problems but what is not agreed upon is the 'source' of each and individual problem, which might affect the realization of self or alienation of self.

Within the secular school of thought, the centre of reality is the conventions which make up a collective unit called 'Society' and the textures of what these realities are all but 'impermanent expressions' of known and unknown forces of material origins. By material origin the proponents of this school do not intend crude or vulgar notions of 'materia' but argue that matter is not a physical object without any intelligence. On the contrary, it embraces within its substantial make-up a very variegated form of intelligibility but what they do deny is the source of 'material intelligence' in any extra-material composition. In their view, 'materia' is intelligible but there is no source to return to but circularity and best to regard it as a self-independent sphere unto itself. The trick in this position is the very semantic definition of 'intelligibility' and what one should make of the role of it in relation to the matter within scientific discourse of modernity. One of the highest forms of intelligible expressions or what made an expression intelligible has traditionally been the ability to 'apprehend', comprehend', or 'understand' and ultimately put it in expressible format. Nobody can dispute that any matter is capable of such expression but the scientific discourse has altered few rules of the metaphysical game by arguing that even the very simple inorganic matters within physical universe do express themselves comprehensively. But what makes such a grandiose expression go amiss is the 'format of expression', which by the aid of scientific hand would come to comprehensible light. When this fact is comprehended in the light of science anybody would admit the intelligibility of the matter and confess the closed nature of the physical universe as a sufficient system unto itself and realize the intelligible character of the matter. But the question remains unanswered and that is 'who' brought all these to the light?

A scientist is a human being and regardless of his/her denial of the intelligible reality beyond and above the material realm he is a doomed expression of intelligibility but what he does within the secular school of thought is to be a spokesman of matter by relying unknowingly on

'intellectual faculties' that operate above 'sensible' and 'material' realms. This choice is not a scientific result, which even it was it was a very insignificant choice, but a metaphysical ignorance. By employing this term 'metaphysical ignorance' it is not intended to pass a moralistic judgment, which is normal to pass when one is unable to reason and produce reasonable critique, which would finally pave the way for the intelligible contemplation. On the contrary, this term refers to a very essential point, which is absent from modern philosophy of science due to the fact that the craftsmen within this school are all but inattentive to the holistic nature of reality and the spirit which envelopes its nature, namely purposefulness. This is inaccessible to materialist school of science, which reduces the multifarious dimensions of reality to phenomenon and again re-reduces the phenomenal world to material system of physicality. In this context, the term 'ignorance' is not fraught with ethical connotations but it has a very strict metaphysical message to convey, namely *ignarus* = not to know of. Not to know of what? Within this context *ignarus* refers to a mind which does not know of the degree of knowledge and stations of reality that are expressed *gradually* (i.e. stage by stage) in each level of reality according to the potential realm of each and one level of reality. The lack of the unfolding process of reality and to conceive of Realness as either a Big Bang or one-dimensional expressible demonstrative self-contained stage is metaphysically considered as 'ignorance'. To be ignorant of the stage of reality in relation to physical dimension and natural order would express itself in misconceived approach to utilization of natural resources, which is a minor reflection of the greater ignorance before the degrees of reality in relation to Human Self that does express all three levels of reality: sensible, reasonable, and intelligible. Now the question is how to view the realization or alienation of self in relation to multilayered nature of Reality? In any realization there must be essentially a glimpse of 'realness' that is aimed to be released or brought forward or the lack of it, which would surely lead to alienation. If the whole gamut of reality is confined to the sensible realm and educational system erected accordingly then what is realized is nothing but a cripple self, which is incapable of nobility and truthful expression. Or again, if the gamut of realness is stretched as far as the abstract realm of reason, then the self is not fully expressed and its cordial dimension ignored *in toto*. A total self-realization should bring about the forces of all three dimensions of reality into the heart of human soul and therefrom set on to realise fully the entire empire of potentialities into the dynamic realm.

The major theories of self-realization or self-alienation are grandly operative either within the sensible realm or the reasonable domain and even when the proposed theories set to rectify the ills of non-realization, one alienating force is replaced by a multiply one and the goose chase

goes on *ad infinitum.* This endless attempt to rectify the alienating forces and pave the way for realizing forces of self to express itself is related to the complexity of human psyche (within psychoanalytical discourses) and human society (within social-philosophical discourses). Although it is undeniable that human existence and all the dimensions of human life, whether individual or collective, are of great complexity nevertheless it should be re-emphasised that the complexities of human life are not of the same order under debate within modern secular discourses.

When one thinks of realization there must be something to be realised and the lack of what is there to be realized is what may lead to alienation. The conviction that life is without purpose or meaning is associated with a loss of existential values and within modern discourses of existentialism is equivalent to outrageous mood of anxieties, which ultimately would lead to alienation, and loss of self. However it seems the conviction that life is with purpose within this discourse is a matter of 'individual choice' and related to social dimensions and unrelated to cosmological aspects of reality. This self-realization of self-alienation is disconnected from the wider reality which envelopes man in his entirety and ensures that his entire self is in deep relation to the all-embracing force of reality, which does express itself in the fragrance of a rosaceous as well as in the tears of an orphan child. In other words, the purposefulness of social reality cannot be established without any essential connection to the cosmological purposefulness, which embraces all aspects of reality in its matrix by expressing itself in all levels of realness.

In psychiatry and clinical psychology, alienation is not regarded as a mental disorder in and of itself. It is recognized as playing a role in *antisocial personality disorder, which is characterized by a lack of interest in the rights and feelings of other. This approach to lack of realization of self is based on socialization-paradigm and does not relate in any profound sense to the idea of Satori, 'Irfan, or Nobility as discussed above. Historically speaking the current modes on the question of realization is related to the philosophical atheism that goes back to Ludwig Feuerbach who developed his philosophical atheism from a negative reaction to Hegel.*

He sees man's nature as a social being to be grounded on sensible reality as opposed to Hegel's 'pure thought'. He calls Hegelian Philosophy 'the last prop of theology.'[663]

He does use Hegel's concept of self-alienation, the return of the absolute Spirit to itself from a self-alienation in Nature, in his philosophy. He substitutes man for the Absolute Spirit. He sees this substitution as a transformation of theology into anthropology. Thus, religion becomes a philosophical anthropology. We shall look at two aspects of this philosophy. First, how man's dependence on Nature leads to a projected God of man's self-consciousness. Secondly, how he views Christianity as the apex of religions.

In his work The Essence of Religion Feuerbach considers historical religion. Man begins by venerating the forces of Nature because he is conscious of his dependence on the outside world. The concept of personal gods or a God arises from self-projection. In polytheism man deifies the qualities which differentiate one man from an *other*. We see anthropomorphic deities each with a unique personal characteristic. In monotheism man projects his concept of man as essentially a social being into a unified transcendent God. The evolution from polytheism to monotheism takes place when man realizes he can manipulate Nature for his own purposes. He then sees Nature as that which exists for him. This implies an intelligent Creator with a purpose. This Creator is nothing more than a projection of man's own essence into an infinite personal Deity. This Creator becomes the expression of man's alienation from himself. This objective God

> . . . is the absolute positive, the essence of all realities, while man is the negative, the essence of nothingness.[664]

This alienation in religion must be overcome. It is just a stage in man development of self-awareness until he realizes this objective essence is really his very own essence. Thus, we start with a dependence on Nature and progress to religion. In religion we progress from polytheism to monotheism. Finally, we progress from God to the essence of self.

Feuerbach sees Christianity as the apex of religion. The Trinity is a projection of the power of love in the essence of man as a social being. The Incarnation unites the word God with the word Man to make a God-Man. He sees this God-Man as achieving the link between humanity and its projection God. We must develop this insight a bit further by reversing humanity as an attribute of God to see God as an attribute of man. This reversal overcomes the self-alienation in religion. Man realizes God is really his own idealized essence projected into a transcendent image. This allows man to recover faith in himself regarding his power and future.

> Love is the universal law of intelligence and nature—it is nothing else but the realization of the unity of the species on the plane of feeling.[665]

We see by this statement the only positive aspect of love in Feuerbach's philosophy even though he had to destroy Christianity to arrive at it. Thus, Christianity becomes nothing more than a means to an end for man's self-awareness.

In conclusion, Feuerbach sees man as evolving in his self-awareness from dependence on Nature to the idea of God as a projection of man's

self-consciousness. Christianity is seen as the apex of religion because it links the humanity to the Divinity. We must further evolve to realize the divinity of humanity. Then we will see God as nothing more than a projection of our essence.

The philosophical metaphysics of modernity within social theory is not essentially different than the scientific discourse, which empties the symbolic texture of reality by dividing it into various disciplines and domains without any symbolic significance. To realize then is even conceptually a disputed question and the lack of it is itself an epi-phenomenon due to the fact that 'Self' does not have any interior dimensions capable of harbouring any potentiality for inner consciousness and dynamic awareness. For, there is no inner dimension and the self is a tapestry of disconnected sporadic imprints of events and incidents and what keeps this elusive persona together is the imposing social force, namely collective conscience.

On the other hand, the process of self-realization in each of the three traditions of Zen, Islam and Liberalism is an attempt to transform the subject by awakening the inner voice of conscience and bring about all the dispersed forces of moral agent into unity, integrity and balance. This realization happens by the light of soul-searching. No new knowledge is acquired, but old assumptions fall away. No effort in the world can make you what you already and actually are. The truth behind ego is a no-thing-ness too close for investigation, since it is the very source from which the attempt to investigate arises. Seeing this makes it clear that the activating agent in all your actions is not a fictional 'me', but the universal energy, or one's true Self. The belief in a 'me', as well as the seeking for enlightenment, is seen through by no-one as nothing but the playful activity of this primal activating energy. The cosmic joke in the journey of the seeker is that the energy that fuels the seeking is precisely what is being sought. In Zen this is called *riding an ox in search of an ox*. Wei Wu Wei compared it to looking for your spectacles, not realizing that they are on your nose and, were you not looking through them, you wouldn't be able to see what you are looking for.[666] IT awakens to itself or, more to the point, IT is Awakeness itself. It is the light in which all apparent opposites reveal their interdependence and ultimate One-ness; it is the clarity in which the illusion of separation dissolves. The witness and that which is witnessed merge into witnessing, while the illusion of past and future dissolves into the clarity of timeless presence. As It Is, life is not a meaningless absurdity. The meaningfulness of life is not bestowed upon by mortal man, either individual or collective. The meaning of life is inherent in life and once it is not obvious to the very eyes of mankind in its collectivity, then it is the beginning of Great Occultation. Life has no meaning beyond itself. The Beyond is manifested as Life and the whole existential universe of man is implicated within the matrix of manifested Beyond. It is always at the point of completion and, simultaneously, as fresh as the morning dew at the dawn of creation.

Spiritual Ascent in Buddhism, Christianity and Islam: A Study In Comparative Mysticism

Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu
International Islamic University Malaysia

Abstract

This study examines the doctrine of spiritual ascent, central to mystical experience, as taught in theistic mysticism, as exemplified in Christianity and Islam, and non-theistic or monistic mysticism, as manifested in Buddhism. The study highlights the common characteristics and the variations in the teachings of spiritual ascent according to these three world religions. The primary objective is to explore how the universal human aspiration for a transcendental experience common to these mystical traditions could be brought into contact with, or understood in the light of, the belief systems and values in which a particular mystical concept or formula sprouts.

Introduction

Mystical experience lies in the very depth of human spiritual consciousness. All other relationships count for less when compared with the relationship of the soul with God/the Supreme Being. Mystical experience, claimed to be the custodian of this relationship, has been seen by many writers as being at the heart of all religions, the point of light on which all seekers converge.[667] E. G. Browne, a great Orientalist scholar, has rightly observed it that "there is hardly any soil, be it ever so barren, where it [Mysticism] will not strike root; hardly any creed, however formal, round which it will not twine itself . . . It is in essence an enunciation more or less clear, more or less eloquent, of the aspiration of the soul to cease altogether from self and to be at one with God."[668]

In moving towards this goal, of union with God/the Supreme Being, there are naturally preliminary stages and processes, marked differently in different traditions, but sharing a number of common characteristics. Spiritual ascent in Buddhism can be found in the doctrines of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path, and the final goal is called "*Nirvāna*" (annihilation). In Christian mysticism, three stages are described for spiritual ascent, which are: Purgative Life, Illuminative Life and Unitive Life. The experience of these three stages is called the "Dark Night", and the end of the quest is referred to as "Spiritual Marriage." In Islam, spiritual ascent is taught in the Sufi doctrine of *Maqāmāt* and *Ahwāl* (stations and states), and the apex of the quest lies in *al-Fanā'* (self-annihilation).

The study is to a great extent a descriptive account based on the insider's perspective of the doctrine of spiritual ascent. Its purpose is neither to exhibit how a particular mystical teaching of one mystical tradition might have infiltrated into another nor to investigate the validity or the truth claims of a particular mystical experience. It is rather to explore how the esoteric interpretation of religious experience could be brought into contact with, or understood in the light of, the exoteric ethico-religious tradition that harbours it.

Spiritual Ascent in Buddhist Mysticism

Origin and Development of Buddhist Mysticism

Buddhism is a religion and philosophy founded by Siddhartha Gautama in Northeast India within the period of the late Sixth Century to the early Fourth Century BC. The word 'Buddha', which means awakened, illuminated or enlightened, is not a proper name but a title, which the founder of Buddhism obtained only at the time of his spiritual experience.[669] Since Buddha is a title, the Buddhist tradition has postulated that other Buddhas have lived on earth in the past or will do so in the future. All such Buddhas, known as *samma-sambuddha*, or the perfect fully Awakened Ones, are nevertheless seen only rarely within the vast and ancient cosmos. As Buddha does not refer to a unique individual, Buddhism focuses more on the teaching of Buddha and less on the personality of its founder than, for example, Christianity. Nor does Buddhism recognise the existence of God, as in Christianity and Islam. Nevertheless, Buddhists do show great reverence to Gautama as a supreme teacher and an exemplar of the ultimate goal that all strive for.[670]

The earliest Buddhist mysticism was concerned with the emptying of the subjective being, considered to be the greatest obstacle to individual

spiritual growth. Central to the Buddhist teaching is practical renunciation of the worldly appetites binding the soul to suffer and experience illusion. That detachment must be secured by the discipline of meditation which leads to a spiritual enlightenment that allows man to see the apparent world in its true light and thus deprives it of all attraction. Because of this avowed quest for a reality transcending outer appearances, mysticism, according to some writers, is interwoven in the whole pattern of Buddhism.[671]

There are three eminent aspects of Buddhism that aim to guide towards perfection: (1) The Promethean personality of Buddha. (2) Dharma, the Good Law pointing the way to liberation. (3) Shangha or Brotherhood of the Bikhus, whole body of monks and saints.[672]

In the course of its long history, Buddhism has seen the development of three huge bodies of religious doctrine and practice, which are characteristically called *yana* (vehicles). The earliest Buddhist movement was called Hīnayāna (the Lesser Vehicle), later known as Therāvada, (the Doctrine of the Elders). Therāvada Buddhism tends toward a conservative, orthodox interpretation of the Buddha's teaching. Since the beginning of the Common Era, Therāvada has been challenged by a later movement that called itself Mahāyāna (the Great Vehicle). It claimed to be a more comprehensive and universal way toward liberation, with a more ambitiou religious ideal, and with a more liberal and innovative interpretation of tl Buddha's teachings. In the Sixth Century CE, or perhaps a little earlie a third orientation emerged, the movement called Vajrayāna (Diamona Vehicle), commonly referred to as Tantric or Esoteric Buddhism in the West. It was characterised by its use of spells, symbols, and very complicated rituals, the acquisition of magic powers as a way toward enlightenment, by the development of psychological techniques; and by a system of esoteric transmission from master to disciple.[673]

The Four Noble Truths

Generally speaking, mystical practices and esoteric sects are to be found in all forms of Buddhism. The essence of the Buddha's teaching lies in the **Four Noble Truths** (*Cattāri Ariyasaccāni*). They are: (1) life is fundamentally disappointment and suffering; (2) suffering is a result of one's desires for pleasure, power, and continued existence;(3) in order to stop disappointment and suffering one must stop desiring; and (4) the way to stop desiring, and thus suffering is the Eightfold Noble Path. The fourfold structure resembles the practice of the doctors of the Buddha's day: (i) diagnose a disease, (ii) identify the cause, (iii) determine whether it is curable, and (iv) outline a course of treatment to cure it.(1)

The Eightfold Noble Path

The Eightfold Noble Path (*Ariya-Aṭṭhangika-Megga*), together with the Four Noble Truths sums up the whole of Buddhist teaching. It is also called the Middle Path, as it steers a course between the sensual pleasures of the materialists and the self-mortification of the ascetics. Those who follow the Eightfold Path are freed from the suffering that is an essential part of human existence and are led ultimately to *Nirvāna*, or Enlightenment, as will be discussed below. The Eightfold Noble Path consists of: (2) right view or understanding: faith in the Buddhist view of the nature of existence in terms of the Four Noble Truths;(3) right aspiration: the resolve to practice the faith;(4) right speech: avoidance of falsehoods, slander, or abusive speech;(5) right conduct: abstention from taking life, stealing, and improper sexual behaviour;(6) right livelihood: rejection of occupations not in keeping with Buddhist principles;(7) right effort: avoidance of bad and development of good mental states;(8) right mindfulness: awareness of the body, feelings, and thought; and(9) right contemplation: meditation.(10)

The order of the eight Path-factors can be seen as that of a natural progression, with one factor following on from the one before it. Right understanding comes first because it guides to know the right and wrong form of each of the eight factors; it also counteracts spiritual ignorance. From the cold knowing of right understanding blooms a right way of thinking and intention. From this, a person's speech becomes improved, and thus his action. Once he is working on right action, it becomes natural to incline towards a virtuous livelihood. With this basis, there can be progress on right effort. This facilitates the development of right awareness, which allows the development of the calm of meditative concentration.(11)

Buddhist Meditation (Dhyana)

The practice of mental concentration, the eighth Path, will lead ultimately through a succession of stages to the final goal of 'spiritual fire', which is *Nirvāna*, 'extinction', 'quenching' or 'blowing out'.(12) Meditation occupies a central place in Buddhism and combines, in its highest stages, the discipline of progressively increased introversion with the insight brought about by wisdom.

The object of concentration may vary according to the individual and the situation. One Pāli (an Indo-Aryan language used as the liturgical and scholarly language of Therāvada) text lists forty types of *Kammatthanas*, including devices (such as a colour or a light), repulsive things (such as a corpse), recollections (as of the Buddha), and the *brahmaviharas* (virtues, such as friendliness). Four stages (in Sanskrit *dhyanas*; in Pāli *jhanas*) are

distinguished in the shift of attention from the outward sensory world. They are: (1) detachment from the external world and a consciousness of joy and ease, (2) concentration, with suppression of reasoning and investigation, (3) the passing away of joy, with the sense of ease remaining and (4) the passing away of ease as well, bringing about a state of pure self-possession and equanimity.[674]

The *dhyanas* are followed by four further spiritual exercises, the *samapattis* (attainments). They are described as: (1) consciousness of infinity of space; (2) consciousness of the infinity of cognition; (3) concern with the unreality of things (nihility); (4) consciousness of unreality as the object of thought.[675]

Tantrism, the esoteric sect of Buddhism, has a unique method of how meditation could be practiced. Tantric specialists warn that in order to correctly use the body's processes to achieve an identification of the void with compassion, the aspirant must follow absolutely and unconditionally the instructions of a master or teacher who has been initiated into the mysteries and can teach the correct use of the body's process. Also, he must prove his sincerity, purity, and detachment before he will be accepted as a disciple; for his spiritual welfare will then be the responsibility of the Guru's instructions much as a patient obeys the instructions of his doctor.[676]

The master first endeavours to direct the student to compassion throug meditation on the transitoriness of life, the relation of cause and effect c one's actions, and the general suffering of humanity. After this sympathy for the suffering of humanity is aroused, the master guides his pupil in *yogic*, or contemplative, exercises that help to produce inner experiences corresponding to the various stages of spiritual growth. This process of advancement toward enlightenment involves the identification of the initiate with gods or goddesses that represent various cosmic forces. These gods are first visualised with the help of *mudras* (meditative gestures and postures), *mantras* (sacred syllables and phrases), and images, all of which are believed to possess the essence of the divinities to be invoked. The images are portrayed in a *mandala*, a sacred design that represents the universe as an aid to meditation. After this visualisation, the initiate identifies with the divinities and finds that each in turn is *shunyata*, or emptiness.[677]

Nirvāna

The goal of the Eightfold Noble Path and Buddhist meditation is Nirvāna (Pāli Nibbāna, which literally means 'extinction' or 'blowing out',). The concept of Nirvāna (adopted from Hinduism) is so important in Buddhism that the whole of Buddhist mysticism is reduced to its attainment.[678] Nirvāna is conceived somewhat differently within the various schools of Buddhism.

In the Therāvada tradition, it is tranquillity and the blissful unconditioned peace. In the schools of the Mahāyāna tradition, Nirvāna is equated with *shunyata* (emptiness), with *dharma-kaya* (the real and unchanging essence of the Buddha), and with *dharma-dhatu* (ultimate reality). The Buddhist description both of the experience and of the path that leads to it is characterised by a spare simplicity as well as by a persistent reluctance to use any but negative predicates.[679]

The three negative terms—non-attainment, non-assertion, and non-reliance—define a state of utmost emptiness by which Nagarjuna, the most renowned Madhyamika thinker in the Second Century CE, described enlightenment. Non-attainment consists of emptying the self of all personal qualities, desires, and thoughts, indeed of all that might be considered to comprise a "self." Ultimate reality is void of all defining distinctions.[680] Non-assertion is the logical counterpart of the emptiness doctrine. This doctrine reveals an intense awareness of the ineffable quality of ultimate truth. No expression is considered to be definitive, not even the Four Noble Truths on which Buddhism is founded.[681] Writing on Nirvāna from a comparative perspective, E. M. Abrahams explains that "Nirvāna is not a subjective state of mind or being where the aspirant 'arrives.' It transcends the individual mind. It may be likened to the Buddhist version of the Eternal."[682] It is contrasted to samsara, which refers to the fleeting world of temporal events, and of constant change and suffering which are subject to the endless round of reincarnation.[683]

Nirvāna is often divided into two states or levels: Nirvāna and Pari-Nirvāna. In this sense, Nirvāna is not necessarily the annihilation of all existence. Rather it is a state of release from all pain and ignorance, accompanied by a sense of profound rest, which is achieved by all Arhats (saints) while still living in this world, and notably by Buddha when he attained Buddhahood. Higher than this is the state of Pari-Nirvāna which means the absolute termination of migration, with the extinction of all the elements of bodily existence. This took place when the Buddha died after innumerable previous 'deaths'.[684]

Spiritual Ascent in Christian Mysticism

Origin and Development of Christian Mysticism

Mysticism has indeed been inherent in the teaching of Christianity from the very beginning. The mystical aspect of early Christianity finds its fullest expression in the letters of St. Paul and the Gospel. For Paul, mystical aspiration is always for union with Jesus Christ. The reoccurring phrase "in Christ" implies a personal union, a participation in Christ's Crucifixion. In

the Gospel according to John, particularly in the farewell discourse (chapters 14-16), Jesus is reported to have predicted his imminent death and of his return in Spirit to unite himself with his followers. In the prayer of Jesus in chapter 17, there is a vision of an interpenetrating union of souls in which all who are one with Christ share his perfect union with the Father.[685]

Besides the Pauline and Johannine traditions, an early Christian mystical trend can be traced to the Gnostics (early Christian heretics who viewed matter as evil and the spirit as good). According to the mysticism of the Gnostics, those who are saved must renounce the world completely and follow the pure ethic of love and compassion. They will then be identified with Jesus and become rays of the divine light.[686]

The classic forms of Eastern Christian mysticism appeared towards the end of the Second Century, when the mysticism of the early Church began to be expressed in categories of thought explicitly dependent on the Greek philosophical tradition of Plato and his followers. The notion of deification (*theiosis*) fits in with the New Testament emphasis on becoming sons of God in such texts as 2 Peter 1:4, which talks about sharing in the divine nature. These ecumenical adaptations later provided an entry for the language of union with God, especially after the notion of union became more explicit in Neoplatonism, the last great pagan form of philosophical mysticism. Many of these themes were already present in embryonic form in the works of the early Eastern Christian mystics, i.e. Clement of Alexandria (d. 211-215), Origen (d. 254) and Evanrius Ponticus (346-399).[687]

Perhaps the most influential of all Eastern Christian mystics was Dionysius the Areopagite, probably a Syrian monk who lived about 500 CE. In his Ecclesiastical Hierarchies, Dionysius expounds three ways of spiritual life by which human nature is 'divinized'. These are Purgation, Illumination, and Union, the three stages of mystical progress which appear in the teachings of many later Christian mystics and which were already suggested by the three stages of perfection taught by Plotinus.[688] Dionysius taught that God cannot be known at all in the ordinary sense, but he can be experienced. Though he began his *Mystical Theology* with a passing reference to an invocation of Trinity, Dionysius refrained from mentioning God the Father or the Son. Rather, he focused entirely on the unity of God, the undivided Ultimate Reality and Godhead that lives in complete darkness beyond all light. Dionysius taught a negative way, wherein the mystic is plunged into the 'Darkness of Unknowing' and is 'wholly absorbed in Him Who is beyond all'.[689] Likewise, the mystic, aiming for the Divine vision, must remove all impediments, so that in "ascending upwards from particular to universal conceptions we strip off all qualities in order that we attain a naked knowledge of that Unknowing which in all existent things is enwrapped by all objects of knowledge, and that we may begin to see

that super-essential Darkness which is hidden by all the light that is in existent things."[690]

Another prominent mystic of Eastern Christianity was Saint John Climacus, who lived in the Seventh Century. Using the biblical image of 'Jacob's ladder' ascending into heaven by first renouncing the world and finally ending up in heaven with God, he described thirty steps in the ascent to God in his work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, which is read in Orthodox monasteries during Lent. Spiritual perfection or salvation is not attainable at once, but comes after a long arduous process of spiritual striving or *askesis*. In this process, with sustained effort, one rises *gradually* through higher and higher levels of spiritual development. The steps eventually lead the spiritual striver to *theosis*, divinization or salvation, which is the ultimate goal of spiritual struggle. Overall, the divinization of a man is fundamental to Eastern Christian mysticism.[691]

The founder of Western Catholic mysticism was Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (354-430). In his *Confession*, Augustine mentions two experiences of "touching" or "attaining" God. Later, in the *Literal Commentary on Genesis*, he introduced a triple classification of visions—corporeal, spiritual, (i.e. imaginative) and intellectual—that influenced later Christian mystics for centuries. The influence of Neoplatonist philosophers, such as Plotinus, was evident in his classification.[692] Other prominent mystics include Johannes Eckhart (1260-1327/28?) and Teresa of Avila (1515-1582). John of the Cross (1542-1591) has been regarded as the most profound and systematic of all Roman Catholic mystical thinkers. His four major works, *The Dark Night of the Soul, The Ascent of Mount Carmel, A Spiritual Canticle of The Soul*, and *The Living Flame of Love*, constitute a full theological treatment of the active and passive purgations of the senses and the spirit, the role of illumination, and unification of the soul with God in 'Spiritual Marriage'.[693]

Mysticism also finds a rich expression in Protestantism. Contrary to the conventional belief about the corruption of human nature, as held by the established Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, Protestant mystics emphasized the divine element in humanity and that the life of God is already in the souls of men, which was called the "spark" or "ground" of the soul. Thus, supreme authority lies, of necessity, not in the written word of Scripture, but in the Word of God in the self. Among the chief representatives of Protestant mystics are the continental "Spirituals," such as Sebastian Franck (1499-1542), Valentin Weigel (1533-88), and Jakob Böhme (1575-1624).[694]

In general, the tenor of early Christian mysticism was determined by the New Testament and trends in Hellenistic Judaism (especially Philo Judaeus's scriptural theology and the late Judaic meaning of *gnosis*). A third factor was usually referred to as Neoplatonism.

Christian mystics have described the stages of the return of the soul to God in a variety of ways. The three stages of the Way which have been accepted in the Western Catholic Christianity and cover the stages of the Way as set forth in the religious systems of the Eastern Orthodox Christianity are Purgative life, Illuminative life, and Unitive life.

Purgative Life

The first stage is known as Purgative life, whose purpose is 'dying to self,' that is, emptying the self to free up space for God. This is the stage of purification from the fetters of sin represented by sensuality and self-will, to move away from the world of the senses and ego to the higher, eternally abiding reality of God. The soul must be purified of all those feelings, desires, and attitudes that separate it from God. Purification is secured only by self-discipline, and for the majority of mystics, a life of strict asceticism has seemed to be the only way by which the carnal self could be purged of the sins which defile it.[695]

Christian mystics have always taken Christ, especially the crucified Christ, as the model for this process. According to them, following Christ involves a 'dying to self', giving up oneself wholly to God, so that one may be possessed by the Divine Love.[696]

In this stage, the practice of meditation and contemplative prayer stressed, particularly by the Eastern Christian mystics. This is referred to as Hesychasm (from *hesychia*, "stillness"). The method is the concentration of the mind on the divine Presence, induced by the repetition of the 'Jesus prayer' which was formalized as "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner."[697] Unconditional obedience to the master is necessary to undergo this experience. On this, it is said that "obedience is the food of all the saints. By her they are nourished. Through her they come to perfection."[698]

Through prayer, supplication and meditation, the disciple gets accustomed to a life of mortification. Once this has happened, God suddenly darkens the light of divine favor which had recently been given spiritual delight. The mystic now finds that he is losing the desire to meditate. A feeling of dryness invades his senses, for God has taken the 'goods' formerly infused into the senses, and transferred them to the spiritual faculties. Each divine purgation or bridling of the appetite and faculties will throw the individual into uncertainty about his sanctity, a problem that can be conquered by faith alone. Constant insecurity and the overwhelming need to rely solely on faith are two of the main reasons this route is called a *Dark Night*. The arrival of the "night of faith" is at midnight. "This spiritual night of faith removes everything, both in the intellect and in the senses."[699]

Illuminative Life

When the soul has been stripped of all that is opposed to the One Perfect God, it is ready to pass onto the next stage, known as Illuminative Life. The mystic, purified from the gross hindrances to perfection and enabled to conform in his outward life to what is required of the servant of God, has now the harder task of purifying the inner self. He needs to bring all faculties, thought, feeling, and will, into conformity with what he now knows to be the Divine Will. This means that all that he was is now merged into the sole desire to serve Him in adoring love. "The soul now seeks not and possesses not, any other will but that of doing the God's Will."[700]

The soul has been on the ascendancy, its sensory part, as well as its spiritual part, is better able to receive God's communications. It is purer now and, locked together with the spiritual part of the soul, is affected by the increased flow of loving, divine wisdom. However, because it is sensible, i.e., weak and incapable of vigorous spiritual communications, one often suffers bodily harms and injuries. This is a direct outcome of the contemplation that the spiritual part of the soul is receiving. As they become progressively united and conformed, the two parts of the soul are prepared to suffer through the more profound and painful darkness ahead. "Both the sense and the spirit undergo such agony and pain that the soul would consider death a relief."[701]

Unitive Life

The mystic who has passed through the stages of the Purgative and Illuminative life now enters upon the last stage of the Way, the final state of perfection which is the main goal of the quest. This is referred to as Unitive Life, in which the soul beholds the Supreme Reality face to face in the Beatific Vision, and is joined thereunto in conscious union. That mystic can now say "I live, yet not I, but God in me." Now the soul is conscious of a Being who surpasses the ego and yet at the same time is identified with it. It feels itself identified in union with the Divine; it has passed from consciousness of self and is absorbed in the consciousness of God; it has become deified.[702]

This Unitive stage is frequently spoken of as a "Spiritual Marriage." While Purgative Life relates to the beginners and Illuminative Life to the advanced, to the state of spiritual betrothal, Unitive Life, being the final state of perfection, the most beatific state relates to the 'Spiritual Marriage' that weds God and the soul. John of the Cross describes the nature of this most beatific state in the following way:

> This is the union of the nature of the soul, in solitude, cleansed from all impurity, natural, temporal, and spiritual, with the Bridegroom alone, with His nature, by love only—that of love which is the only love of the spiritual marriage, wherein the soul, as it were, kisses God when none despises it nor makes it afraid . . . When the soul has been raised to the high state of spiritual marriage, the Bridegroom reveals to it, as His faithful consort, His own marvellous secrets most readily and most frequently, for he who truly and sincerely loves hides nothing from the object of his affections. The chief matter of His communications are the sweet mysteries of His incarnation, the ways and means of redemption, which is one of the highest works of God, and so is to the soul one of the sweetest.[703]

This stage has two main aspects. First, while the consciousness of self and the world remains, that consciousness is accompanied by a continuous sense of union with God. Second, the spirit is in a theopathic state: the soul is felt to be in all things the organ or instrument of God. In this stage the mystic is able to engage in spiritual activities without losing the grace of union. The mystics are "contemplative in action".[704]

Spiritual Ascent in Islam

Origin and Development of Sufism in Islam

Islamic mysticism is called *'taṣawwuf'*, translated into English as 'Sufism'. The term is derived from *Safā* (purity) or *Sūf*, (wool), plausibly a reference to the woollen garment of the early Islamic ascetics.[705] "The Sufi approach," says Ibn Khaldūn, "is based upon constant application to divine worship, complete devotion to God, aversion to the false splendour of the world, abstinence from the pleasure, property, and position to which the great mass aspires, and retirement from the world into solitude for divine worship."[706]

True Sufism, in its pristine and simple form traces its origin and way of life back to the Qur'ān and Prophetic Sunnah. Numerous Qur'ānic verses urging humans to constantly maintain *dhikr Allāh* (commemoration of God) (i.e. 2:152; 3:191; 29:45; 32:41-42) coupled with the Prophet's experience of retirement in the cave of *Hirā'* before the Divine Revelation was sent to him, has led Sufis to attach a considerable importance to *dhikr* and meditation. The powerful eschatological overtones of the Qur'ānic message (i.e. 3:14; 57:20) together with the Prophet's austere way of life encouraged Sufis to

renounce worldly affairs and go into retreat, particularly when other people in the community allowed themselves to be dragged into the whirlpool of the world, as was the case in the Second Century of the Islamic era.[707]

Thus, Islamic teaching alone is sufficient to have given rise to Sufism. Nevertheless, when Islam was brought into contact with other cultures, Sufism was subject to different foreign ideas and theories, some of which were believed to be incompatible with Islamic tenets.[708] This adoption and adaptation of foreign elements into Islamic spirituality resulted in Sufism being subjected to severe criticism in philosophical, theological and juristic circles.[709]

There is a little difference between Sufis (who are overwhelmingly Sunnites) and their counterparts in Shī'ism (a second Islamic sect). Both Sufis and Shī'ite mystics believe that everything was created from the primordial or pre-created Light known as al-Nūr al-Muhammadiyyah (Muhammadan Light) which continued to be manifested in successive prophets until it reached its final historical manifestation in the Prophet Muhammad. The Shī'īs add that 'Alī ibn Abī *Tālib* is also the part of the pre-creation Light; consequently after Prophet Muhammad only 'Alī and his successors, known as Imams, can reveal the inner dimensions of the Divine Law. The love of Prophet Muhammad, his cousin, 'Alī and their descendents and visiting their tombs fill their hearts with spiritual ecstasy much more than the (Sunnite) Sufis.[710]

The first Sufi author was al-Hārith ibn Asad al-Muhāsibī (d. 243/857) in his *Kitāb al-Ri'āyah li-Huqūq Allāh*, but the oldest surviving general account of Sufism has been credited to Abū Nasr al-Sarrāj's (d. 378/988) *Kitāb al-Luma'*. The classical formulation of Sufi doctrines on the mystical side has always been attributed to al-Qushayrī (d. 465/1072) in his *al-Risālah al-Qushayriyyah*; the recognition, or rather re-recognition, and assimilation of its teachings into mainstream Sunnite theology and jurisprudence was accomplished by Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī (d 505/1111) in his *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. Henceforth, Sufism, at least a 'sober' type, was accepted as a reasonable and laudable Muslim way of life.[711]

Spiritual ascent, according to Sufism, consists of two stages. The first stage is referred to as '*Maqāmāt*' (plural of *maqām*, meaning 'stations') and the second stage is referred to as 'Ahwāl' (plural of '*hāl*', meaning states). The apex of the ascent is '*al-Fanā*'' (annihilation or obliteration).

Maqāmāt (Stations)

The levels of the stations indicate the degree of progress attained by the seeker in the Path of God. As instructed by Sufis, the obligation of each

station must be fulfilled, and the virtues pertaining to it acquired before the aspirant passes onto the next station.[712]

The order and number of the *Maqāmāt* are not uniform among all Sufis. Some believe that there are a thousand *Maqāmāt* or even more. The majority, however, agree on seven major *Maqāmāt*. The first station is *maqām* of *tawbah* (repentance). It means the abandonment of all that is forbidden, repulsive or dubious and the turning to God. The Sufis consider *maqām* of *tawbah* as the first, necessary step without which the way forward is closed.

The second station is *maqām* of *wara'* (abstinence). According to al-Sarrāj, one of the early prominent Sufis, there are three levels of abstinence: abstinence from what is dubious, i.e. neither plainly lawful nor plainly unlawful; abstinence from whatever the conscience bids to avoid; and abstinence from whatever diverts the attention from God. The first level is for the public, the second level for the elite and the third level for the cream of the elite.[713]

The third station is *maqām* of *zuhd* (renunciation, or detachment). This means that the person is devoid of possessions and his heart is without acquisitiveness. *Zuhd* consists in knowing that what is renounced is of little value in comparison with what is received. Whoever does not have this knowledge cannot detach himself from the worldly materials. So he who understood that what belongs to God is abiding and that the other life is better and more lasting than this life.

The forth station is the *maqām* of *faqr* (poverty), in which the Sufi asserts his independence of worldly possessions and his need for God alone. The Sufi possesses little that he can call his own, and *faqr* was practised partly in order that the soul might not be distracted by worldly things in its quest for God, and partly as a means of self-discipline, because the soul by nature hates poverty and loves wealth. True poverty is not merely lack of wealth, but lack of desire for wealth; the empty heart as well as the empty hand.

The fifth station is the *maqām* of *ṣabr* (patience), the art of steadfastness and perseverance. Here one remains steadfast and unshakable in all circumstances. *ṣabr* requires that one persist in doing righteous actions and refrain from committing sins. With *ṣabr* one's drive for the untrammelled enjoyment of worldly materials will be brought under control and thus he will not succumb to passion and ignorance toward the precipice of sin and rebellion against divine command.

The sixth station is the *maqām* of *tawakkul* (trust, or surrender), in which the Sufi completely depends on God. He knows that he cannot be discouraged by hardship and pain, for he is in total submission to God's will and finds joy even in his sorrow.

The seventh station is the *maqām* of *riḍā* (satisfaction), a state of quiet contentment and joy that comes from the anticipation of the long-sought union. This means that the Sufi, on his part, is completely acquiescent in all that God ordained for him, and God on His part, is completely satisfied with His servant's attitude towards Him. Because this *maqām* of *riḍā* is reciprocal between God and man, as indicated in the Qur'ān (5:119; 9:100; 58:22; 98:8), it is the terminal point of *Maqāmāt* and the starting point of *Aḥwāl*."[714]

Aḥwāl (States)

Aḥwāl are spiritual states of mind that come to the Sufi from time to time during his journey towards God. They are states of ecstasy bestowed upon the seeker's soul, as signs of favour and grace to encourage him on his path. These graces of *Aḥwāl* cannot be acquired or retained through an individual's own efforts. When the soul is purified of its attachments to the material world, it can only wait patiently for those spiritual gifts of God, which, when they come, fill the Sufi with the desire to continue his journey with new energy and higher expectations.[715]

Though the Sufis speak of hundreds of *aḥwāl*, among those most often referred to are the following: the *ḥāl* of *murāqabah* (watching), the *ḥāl* of *qurb* (nearness), the *ḥāl* of *wajd* (ecstasy), the *ḥāl* of *sukr* (intoxication) and the *ḥāl* of *wudd* (intimacy).[716]

The *Aḥwāl* are distinguished by most Sufis from the *Maqāmāt* (spiritual stages) in two main aspects. First, the *Aḥwāl* are usually transitory, like flashes of lightning they come into the heart and then disappear, whereas *Maqāmāt* stay longer. Second, while *Aḥwāl* denote a gratuitous favour from God, *Maqāmāt* are granted solely on the person's merit and effort.[717]

Al-Fanā' (Annihilation).

The peak of the quest, which is the main goal of the ascent, is *al-Fanā'* which translates as 'self-annihilation' or 'obliteration. *al-Fanā* itself has different levels and different types. Al-Junayd, a prominent early Sufi, describes three stages of *al-Fanā'*: (1) The obliteration of attributes, characteristics and natural qualities in your motives when you carry out your religious duties, making great effort and doing the opposite of what you may desire, and compelling yourself to do the things which you do not wish to do. (2) The obliteration of your pursuit after pleasures in obedience to God's behest—so that you are exclusively His, without any intermediary means of contact. (3) The obliteration of the consciousness of having attained the vision of God at the final stage of ecstasy when God's victory over you is

complete. At this stage you are obliterated and have eternal life with God, and you exist only in the existence of God because you have been obliterated. Your physical being continues but your individuality has departed.[718]

Stage one concerns the active life, and requires perseverance in moral training through a deliberately ascetic lifestyle. This often goes against one's natural inclinations and desires, which normally disrupt the attempt to reach God. Stage two involves cutting oneself off from all pleasures, including the enjoyment of fulfilling God's religious injunctions.[719] It is done so that there remains between God and the worshipper no intermediary objects. This aspect of *al-Fanā'* concerns one's mental and spiritual life. Stage three is that of losing consciousness of everything, even awareness of union with God. The worshipper is so overwhelmed and engulfed by God that he is unaware of anything in the earthly plane of existence. His physical body continues, but his faculty of rational perception has passed away, and he loses his individual awareness.[720]

In addition, Sufis often make a distinction between three types of *al-Fanā'*. The first type is *al-Fanā' 'an wujūd al-siwā* (to be obliterated; to recognize none in existence except God). This type is professed by the pantheists who believe that God is everything and everything is God. Those who subscribe to this type deny any distinction between God and man, good and evil, obedience and disobedience etc. The second type is *al-Fanā'* 'an *shuhūd al-siwā* (to be oblivious of all except God). It is the type which most of the later Sufis refer to as the goal of spiritual ascent. Sufis do not deny th existence of other things besides God, but they believe that the worshipp who has reached this stage will become oblivious of everything, includir himself, except God. This type of *al-Fanā'* is also referred to as intoxicatior (*sukr*). The third type, *al-Fanā' 'an irādat al-siwā* (to be obliterated to the will of God), is professed by the most righteous people. The worshipper who has reached this stage will renounce his wants to the wants of God. He needs nothing except that which God wants. His want has completely dissolved in God's want and, thus, the two wants become one.[721]

Dhikr

Dhikr, 'remembrance' or 'mentioning' like *fikr* (meditation), is a method the Sufi may use in striving to achieve oneness with God. Based on Qur'ānic injunctions (18:28; 33:41), the *dhikr* is essentially a "remembering" of God by the frequent repetition of His Names. Originally, a simple recitation of the Qur'ān and various religious writings suffice. Within Sufi circles, however, *dhikr* acquired various formulas. As the Sufi brotherhoods (*ṭarīqahs*) were established, each adopted a particular *dhikr*, to be recited in solitude (*e.g.*, following each of the five obligatory daily prayers) or as a community.

Sufis lay particular emphasis on having a shaykh (master) or murshid (guardian) in upward spiritual journey. Perfect obedience to a shaykh, in whose hands the novice should be like a corpse in the hands of the undertaker, is necessary to survive the extreme conditions of the Path, particularly the forty days' seclusion in which the disciple's mind was constantly watched by the master who taught him how to respond to the various psychic phenomena that appeared to him during this period. A 'seeker' who attempts to traverse the 'Path' without assistance receives little sympathy. Of such a one it is said that "his guide is Satan," and he is likened to a tree that for want of a gardener's care brings forth "none or bitter fruit."[722]

Similarities and Differences

There are particular preliminary stages that an aspirant has to undergo before embarking on a spiritual journey that takes a wayfarer from a lower to a higher state of experience. According to the three mystical traditions, the practice of meditation is necessary in order to concentrate the mind and prepare it for a spiritually extraordinary experience. Compared to general meditations, meditation for spiritual ascent requires a specific technique/formula that an initiate needs to observe meticulously under the guidance of a *murshid, guru* or master.

The main controversy surrounding the spiritual ascent centres on the nature of *al-Fanā'*, Unitive Life and Nirvāna and the relation of those states of being to the major conscious powers of the subject who experiences it. The mainstream Sufis subscribe to *al-Fanā' 'an shuhūd al-siwā* as indicated above. It is a point where the worshipper will be oblivious to all except God. It does not involve infusion of the essence or identification of the divine and human nature, as Nicholson observes.[723] In spite of this proximity to God, the worshipper does not lose his ontological essence or become part of God. Al-Junayd says that *Fanā'* is not the passing away of our whole being into God's being, but the passing away of our will into the will of God. The ego remains, but it is surrendered to Him. In other words, the consciousness of the lover is completely dissolved in the Beloved, from which state of divine intoxication he returns to himself, to a state of sobriety. He describes how one returns to the state of sobriety after the state of *al-Fanā'*:

> He is himself, after he has not been truly himself. He is present in himself and in God after having been present in God and absent in himself. This is because he has left the intoxication of God's overwhelming *ghalaba* (victory), and comes to the clarity

> of sobriety . . . . Once more he assumes his individual attributes, after *Fanā'*.[724]

Only in that state of sobriety can one provide service to the community, and Sufis are known as "slaves of the One and servants of the many." It is for this reason that Sufis stress the need for sobriety after the state of 'intoxication' and that the stage of servanthood comes after the stage of union.[725] Thus, in the highest stage of *al-Fanā'*, the believer is still separated from God by a veil, causing anguish and suspense.

Some have wrongly interpreted *al-Fanā'* as *hulūl* (incarnation) or *ittihād* (identification of the divine and human nature). Al-hallāj's unfortunate ecstatic utterance, '*anā al-haqq*', ('I am The Truth') was promptly condemned even by mainstream Sufis because it deviated from conventional Sufi teachings. Al-Sarrāj clarifies that:

> This doctrine is strictly Unitarian (*al-Tawhīd*). Those who have given it a wrong interpretation have failed to observe that the qualities of God are not God. To make God identical with His qualities is to be guilty of infidelity (*kufur*), because God does not descend into the heart, but that which descends into the heart is faith in God and belief in His unity and reverence for the thought of Him.[726]

A similar controversy about the nature of union with God exists in Christianity. According to some early Christian mystics, Unitive Life does not entail *transmutation* into the divine nature. William of Saint Thierry in the Twelfth Century sketched out a twofold path to union, an intellectual ascent and an affective ascent. In explaining the relation between the two, he says: "in the contemplation of God where love is chiefly operative, reason passes into love and is transformed into a certain spiritual and divine understanding which transcends and absorbs all reason." For him, the man of God "is found worthy to become not God, but what God is, that is to say *man becomes through grace what God is by nature*." As elaborated by McGinn and Turner, there is no *transmutation* into the divine nature even though through grace one can be divinised.[727]

St. Bonaventure in the Thirteenth Century stressed on the similar point that all the intellectual powers of the soul are brought to bear in the ascent, but affectivity goes beyond intellect. He also made it clear that the affective joining of God and human brought about through spiritual ascent, never takes away the dignity of our personhood. We can never be said to be "one with God" in any univocal sense, because any affirmation of oneness with

the divine nature is incorrect without the addition of some qualification or determination, like *unus "spiritus."*[728]

Another perspective of the nature of union with God indicates substantial union. As McGinn points out, it is probable that Neoplatonic notions of union of identity or indistinction helped provide explanatory categories for some Thirteenth-Century mystics. This view is generally attributed to St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and Eckhart.

In the *Sermones in Cantica*, Bernard insisted that the only power by which humans can deal reciprocally with God is love, and that marital love is the highest form that best expresses union. He described this highest experience of love as follows:

> To lose yourself, as if you no longer existed . . . is not a human sentiment but a divine experience . . . It is deifying to go through such an experience. As a drop of water seems to disappear completely in a big quantity of wine, even assuming the wine's taste and colour, just as red, molten iron becomes so much like fire it seems to lose its primary state; just as the air on a sunny day seems transformed into a sunshine instead of being lit up; so it is necessary for the saints that all human feelings melt in a mysterious way and flow into the will of God. Otherwise, how will God be all in all if something human survives in man?[729]

Besides Bernard's view, Eckhart's notion of *unitas indistinctionis* (the union of indistinction) fits this category. It all starts with his formula that "God's ground and the soul's ground are one ground," that is, there is in the soul a "spark" (vünkelîn) or "castle" (bürgelîn), or "ground" (grunt) that is identical with God. Because God's ground and the soul's ground are in deepest reality one ground, then not only "must God's existence be my existence and God's is-ness my is-ness," but also just as the Father is giving birth to the Son from all eternity, so "He gives me birth, me, his Son and the same Son." Furthermore, since the divine ground, the absolute unity, transcends and has a priority over Trinity, the ultimate mystical goal can be described as a "breaking-through" to indistinct oneness with the Godhead.[730]

While both views can be discerned within the Christian tradition, mainstream Christianity always distances itself from the indistinct union with God and thus Eckhart was posthumously condemned for heresy in 1329. There is no doubt that the Neoplatonic notions of union of identity or indistinction helped provide explanatory categories for some Thirteenth-Century Christian mystics. Nevertheless, *unitas indistinctionis*, as McGinn points out, was born in the depths of the experience of the

mystics of the Thirteenth Century.[731] On top of that, it stemmed from the doctrine of Crucifixion which is rooted in the Christian faith.[732] If it was true that Jesus Christ was a human made divine through Crucifixion and Resurrection and that every true Christian is expected to follow in Christ's footstep, then it behoves every Christian mystic to aspire to a similar union. By contrast, such personal deification or divinization has no root in Islam. Never had Prophet Muhammad, whom the Sufis took as their exemplar, set a precedent or claimed to have been united with God even in his well-known *Mi'rāj* (Ascent) event.

The situation is totally different in Buddhism. The question of the nature of union with God does not exist in Buddhist mysticism simply because there is no concept of God in the first place. In the Hīnayāna school, there is a teaching that a man can attain a state of union with the Cosmic Spirit, here called Brahma: "the Bhikkhu who is free from anger, free from malice, pure in mind, and master of himself should after death, when the body is dissolved, become united with Brahma."[733] In another verse, it is stated that "this is the straight path, this the direct way which leads him, who acts according to it, into a state of union with Brahma."[734] But then that state of union is not considered to be the ultimate state. It is believed that even beyond the 'world of Brahma, there are realms of consciousness and being.[735]

Nirvāna or Pari-Nirvāna may be seen as the Buddhist version of Eternity, but it is not eternity of 'being' because no type of life or existence is postulated at that state. It is neither consciousness nor unconsciousness, neither life nor non-life. Rather it is eternity of 'becoming' from multiple re-births to void/nothingness.[736] If 'being' was ultimately suffering, nothing else could give the ultimate and everlasting happiness in Buddhist mystical thought, except the absolute 'nothingness'.

Obviously, this absolute nothingness has no cognitive similitude in the theistic belief systems,[737] except to construe it perhaps as 'an escape from the torment of Hell Fire without a place in Paradise.' In Islam, in particular, *al-khalq* (creation, leading to existence and life) is fundamentally good, because it is contrived by God, Who is the Absolute Good. Had it been all or partially evil, it would not have been made by God.[738] Yet it is the Hereafter which is better in all respects and which counts the most. Retirement from the worldly splendours is meaningful only if practiced as an act of *'ibādah* (worshiping God). Such a retirement is virtuously practiced among the Sufis, not because life is suffering and consequently evil, but only because it is considered to be the best way to attain *taqwā* (piety/God consciousness)[739] which the Qur'ān declares to be the best *zād* (provision) for the Eternal Life in the Hereafter.

Perhaps the best way to account for this variation in mystical spiritual ascent is to relate it to the worldview in which a particular mystical

concept or formula sprouts. While mysticism is undoubtedly a universal phenomenon, its universal character can better be appreciated within its distinctive belief systems. Thus it is, as Gimello puts it, "inextricably bound up with, dependent upon, and usually subservient to the deeper beliefs and values of the traditions, cultures, and historical milieux which harbour it. As it is thus intricately and intimately related to those beliefs and values, so must it vary according to them."[740]

Concluding Remarks

The mystical experience in the three religious cultures examined in this study recognizes some ascending stages/states of spiritual experience. This experience culminates in a higher state of existence that an aspirant could experience spiritually. The nature of this level of existence and its experience varies from one religious culture to another, depending on each religion's conception of God or deity. The Buddhist concept of *Nirvāna* indicates annihilation, tranquillity or emptiness, simply because there is no God to be united with in Buddhism and no higher point a human can reach beyond that point. The Christian concept of 'Spiritual Marriage' would inevitably lead to deification or divinization. This corresponds to its perspective of Jesus Christ as a man made God. The Sufi concept of *al-Fanā'* is presumed to bring one inwards to the terminal point of divinity. Yet one has to retreat to reassume human nature simply because God is not postulated in Islam as an entity/object to be united with.

Despite the variety of their experiences, those wayfarers who have traversed the apex of spiritual ascent have apparently reached a point of mutual understanding and appreciation. Unfortunately, their experience is, in effect, ineffable, and when it is articulated in words, it is often incomprehensible to non-mystics. To express the Infinite Reality with the finite human languages has not been successful, subjecting mystical experience to severe criticism. Given this ineffability, it is not possible to determine objectively whether these experiences relate the same Reality expressed in different cognitive concepts or different realities expressed in a seemingly similar term.

A Selected Bibliography of 'Irfan/ Sufism

Seyed Sadreddin Safavi,
SOAS, University of London

"Be and it will be", such were the words which arose from the Beloved out of love, turning *'adam* (non-existence) into *Wujud* (Existence.) The Human Being's Spirit, upon hearing these words, turns into a stormy ocean whose waves dance drunken by the Divine melody, with the intention of finding the signs of the Beloved, so that he can free himself from the chains of the material world and return to his original abode. The epic tale of creatio' is the tale of separation and reunion filled with sorrow and joy.

The purpose of the creation of humanity was not for man to live in chac and become a slave to the transient desires of his soul (*Nafs*). Nor was it foı him to create a paradise in the material world, which is transient in nature and doomed to non-existence. But as it is said by Allah, the most exalted creator of the heavens and the earth, "We did not create the human being and Jin, but to worship us." Ibn Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, in his commentary on this verse adds, "*ay li ya'rifun*", "or to know us." As Imam 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, the divinely appointed temporal and spiritual successor of the Prophet, said in the first lecture of his *Nahj al-balagha*:

> "The heading of religion is knowing Allah, and knowing him perfectly is bearing testimony to him, and perfectly bearing testimony to him is believing in his *Tawhid* (Divine unity), and the perfection of believing in his *Tawhid* is purity towards him, and the perfection of purity towards him is the negation of attributes for him . . . He is the God who is with everything but not coexisting with it, and he is other than everything but nothing is empty of him"

Hence, the purpose of creation is for the human being to gain knowledge of Allah. It is for the Particular reason to connect to the Universal Intellect,

so that it can become Divine, and thus see past the illusions of the world. Upon reaching the stage of Divine Intellect, the veils are removed one by one from the human being, and as he sees and hears the sounds and realities of the world, he reaches a stage whereby he sees nothing without seeing God within it, and whereby "he knows that he does not know." This knowledge of lack of knowledge, which follows the formula of "*la ilaha illa Allah*" (there is no deity but Allah), is the highest station of knowledge which is termed "*Heirat*". This knowledge of Allah as the above-mentioned quote from Imam Ali clarified, leads to a perfection of one's deeds and a clarification of one's perception of things, illuminating the path towards unity with Allah.

As Rumi, in his poetic introduction to the Mathnawi, says:

> "Listen to this reed as it laments,
> As it narrates the tale of separation:
> Since they have cut me off from the reed bed,
> Men and women have cried from my lamentation.
> I want a heart torn into pieces from separation
> So that I may describe the pain of eagerness
> Whoever is distanced from his origin
> Will rediscover his era of union."

Every human being, like a rain drop which longs for reunion with its origin, the ocean, longs for reunion with Allah; yet at times he or she is not aware of this deep inner longing, and is lost in the storm-like temptations of the material world (*'alam nasut*) just as the rain drop is at times lost in the storm. He knows that he is seeking something but does not know of its nature; he is in search of happiness and perfection, yet does not know how they can be achieved. Hence, the human being is in need of a light to guide him on the 'straight path'. This light has been made manifest in three forms; the first is the intellect of the human being, the second is the Divine religion, and the third is the Prophets and Imams and the Divine Saints who are the true practitioners, establishers, promoters and commentators of the Divine religion. There is but one Divine religion which is Islam, as Allah in the holy Qur'an, chapter three, verse nineteen says, "*inna al-ddini 'inda Allah Islam*" (truly, the religion with Allah is Islam.). Meta-historically, Islam in its complete form has been present and accessible to Divine saints from the beginning of creation, however in linear history it was revealed gradually to different prophets from Adam to Jesus, till it was revealed in its most perfect and complete form to Prophet Mohammad. Islam, the literal translation of which is "a submission which brings peace", is dividable into three hierarchical, unified and inter-dependent categories which are identified as "*Shari'at, Tariqat* and *Haqiqat.*"

Shari'at is the appearance of religion, which outlines its outward decrees and is the subject of the science of jurisprudence or *fiqh al-jawarih.* The similitude of *Shari'at* to religion is that of the skin to the human body. The great mystic Nasafi in his book titled *Kitab al-insan al-kamil* in regards to *Shari'at* says "*Shari'at* is the saying of the prophets . . . whoever accepts the sayings of the Prophet is from the people of *Shari'at.*"

Tariqat literally means the path. It is the journey from the station of sleep and ignorance (*naum*) to the station of annihilation (*Fana*) within the 'Unity of Divine acts, attributes and essence' respectively, and reaching subsistence with Allah (*Baqa bi Allah).* The human will becomes annihilated in the Divine Will, and as the *Hadith Qudsi* says "When I (Allah) love him, I will become his ear by which he hears, and I will become his tongue by which he speaks, and I will become his hands which he raises towards us. If he calls Me I will answer him, and if he asks of Me I will grant him." Hence *Tariqat* is the essence of religion, it is *fiqh al-nafs* and the path of Love walked by the people of the heart, which leads to union with the Universal Beloved. The similitude of *Tariqat* to religion is the organs of the body to the human being.

Haqiqat is Reaching Allah *(liqaallah),* it is reaching the stage of unity with Allah, and gaining subsistence with Allah, to see him by the heart and to submit one's will to him. It is the manifestation of the Divine essence without a Veil.

'Irfan, Sufism or Islamic mysticism which is also termed *Fiqh al-nafs*, deals with *Tariqat* and *Haqiqat* and is the essence and heart of religion. *'Irfan* togeth with *Shari'at* illuminates the path towards Allah, and is the manual to perfection a spiritual ascent. *'Irfan* is not a dead science or art of the past which is of no benefit t today's humanity; on the contrary, it is a living tradition with practitioners across the globe and is the only solution to the current vacuum of spirituality in modern society.

The crisis of modernism has resulted in a severe decline of the human civilisation. Though modernity was conceived and nurtured in the West, as a result of western colonialism and economical, political, and more importantly cultural and intellectual imperialism, its symptoms and side effects have turned into a worldwide pandemic. One of the principles of modernism was the replacement of God with "I" or the human self as the centre of the world. Whilst in appearance giving the human being supreme significance, humanism in fact led to the reduction of the human being from a multidimensional creation to a one dimensional being, and finally to a wheel within its own industrial machine. Thus the value of the human being is no longer intrinsic to it, but is simply based on its economical output. Another outcome of modernity was that it also changed the primary aim and objective of the human civilisation, which was salvation through the belief in God and spirituality, into dominance over nature. The—isms which arose out of modernity limited humanity, its institutions and the domain of knowledge to the physical, empirical and essentially to only that which can be perceived by the outward senses, negating anything relating to the metaphysical

or spiritual. This reductionist approach of the—isms of modernity resulted in a change in the human perception of its self and its objectives. In using religious terminology these—isms promised the creation of paradise upon the earth, and strived at achieving this. However, as mentioned, this attempt led to the reduction of the human being to a wheel in the industrial machine, which aimed at dominating nature and creating enough material wealth to create the promised earthly paradise. The results of the project of modernity, which promoted the doctrines of survival of the fittest, individualism, and humanism, have been war and the break down of social institutions. This social break down not only manifested itself in the acts of modern man, but also in his material creation and social structure, an example of which is the skyscrapers and tower blocks of the modern cosmopolitan, each of which houses thousands of individuals who are completely disconnected from one another. Furthermore, modernity has damaged the most important social institution, namely the family. Yet the above-mentioned doctrines have not only manifested themselves in individual relationships and interactions, but also in the interaction of citizens with governments, different communities with one another, and international relations, which are now based on power and profit, instead of Justice, peace and the common good. This has resulted in a morbid outcome—namely two world wars and numerous other wars in different parts of the globe, marking a period of continuous death and destruction. The denial of the existence of God and consequently the Divine religion, has resulted in the creation of man-made "scientific ethics" which are ever-changing, being based on the desires of the "mob" as opposed to the ntellect and the nature of the human being, and as a result have failed and led ιo the moral and ethical decline in society. All in all, the project of modernity has not only failed in the creation of an earthly paradise, but it has resulted in the mutilation of the human being, and significantly the earth and Nature, with resulting global warming and the extinction of numerous species.

The modern human being faces an ontological and spiritual crisis, for he does not know "where he is from?", "why he is here?", and ultimately "where he is going to?". The solution to the crisis of modernity, and the spiritual and ontological crisis of the modern human being, is a return to God and spirituality. It is only by a return to the Divine religion and spirituality that the scarred and mutilated body of the modern human being can be healed, and he can rediscover the purpose of his existence. Contrary to the notion that religion is an individual affair, Islamic mysticism, Sufism/'Irfan, does not simply deal with the individual, but aims to create inner peace within the human being, in order to create peace and harmony in society. By enacting a return to the original human form, Sufism proves to be the only solution to the current crisis of humanity, and the only path to salvation and perfection. Seclusion from society is opposed to the fundamentals of Islamic mysticism; the goal of the Sufi is not to worship God in seclusion from society. After reaching Union with Allah as stated by the fourth and last stage of Mulla Sadra's

Asfar al-arba'a, the mystic journeys, "by Haqq (Allah), amongst the creation" in order to establish *tawhid* within society, which will lead to the establishment of the perfect society based on *tawhid*, justice, peace, equality and the common good. This is perfectly exemplified by the Prophet's spiritual ascension (*Mi'raj*), which symbolises the most exalted spiritual state achievable by the human being, and his return from it, after which he continued his spiritual and social revolution. Sufism or 'Irfan in a nutshell is the light which illuminates the path towards union with Allah, the Universal Beloved, which is the path towards peace.

The following bibliography of Sufism (*'Irfan*), which is the most up to date bibliography of Sufism ('Irfan), including all the primary sources in Arabic, Persian and Latin and some of the secondary sources, has been written in order to help students and researchers of Sufism (*'Irfan*).

The sources on Sufism (*'Irfan*) can be divided into four categories:

1. The primary sources which are primarily in Persian and Arabic, such as the works of Abu Sa'id Abul Khair, Qusheiri, Hujwairi, Sarraj, Makki, Ansari, Qazzali, 'ayn al-Quzat, Sanaei, Attar, Suhrawardi, Ibn Faridh, Ibn 'Arabi, Rumi, Shabistari, Sheikh Safi al-din Ardebili, Shah nimatollah wali and Mulla Sadra.
2. The works of the classic commentators, who have interpreted the primary sources, and whose works are primarily in Persian and Arabic such as: Lahiji, Kharazmi, Kashani, Qunawi, Qeisari, Sayyed Heidar Amuli, Mulla Muhsin Feiz Kashani, Mulla Hadi Sabziwari and Ma'asum 'Ali Shah.
3. Modern historians and commentators whose work is greatly influenced by the works of the classic commentators such as: Nicholson, Corbin, Masinion, Schimmel, Arbery, Chittick, Morris, Lewisohn, Lings, Ernst, Helminski, Forouzanfar, Gulpinarli Zarinkoub, Shafi'i Kadkani, Hassan Zadeh Amuli, Jawadi Amuli, Seyed Jalal Ashtiani, Osman Yahya, 'Afifi and Abd al-Rahman Badawi.
4. The work of intellectuals and thinkers who have placed *'Irfan* in the context of contemporary society, and who based on the primary principles of 'Irfan have developed it and expanded its horizons, essentially answering the needs of the modern human being from the perspective of 'Irfan on issues such as modernity, society, environment, art and technology etc. such as: René Guénon('Abdulwahid Yahya), 1886-1951, Imam Khomeini, Allamah Tabatabai, Frithjof Schuon ('Isa Nur al-Din Ahmad), 1907-1988, Titus Burckhardt (Ibrahim 'Izzuddin), 1908-1984, Nasr and Safavi.

It is hoped that the present bibliography will be of benefit to the students and researchers of Islamic mysticism in promoting theoretical and practical Islamic mysticism and answering the needs of the modern human society.

الف- منابع فارسي و عربي

آزمایش، سید مصطفی، **درآمدی بر تحولات تاریخی سلسله نعمت اللهیه در دوران اخیر**، تهران، 1381.
آشتیانی، سیدجلال الدین، **هستی از نظر فلسفه و عرفان**، مشهد: انتشارات زوار، 1345 ش.
آشتیانی، سیدجلال الدین و هانری کربن (ویراستاران) **منتخباتی از آثار حکمای الهی ایران از عصر میرداماد و میرفندرسکي تا زمان حاضر**، بامقدمه کربن وتعلیقات سید جلال الدین آشتیانی، 2 ج، تهران: بخش ایران شناسی انجمن ایران و فرانسه، 1351-1354 ش/ 1971-1975.

آملی، سید حیدر، **نصّ النصوص فی شرح فصوص الحکم**، به کوشش هانری کربن و عثمان یحیی، تهران، انجمن ایران شناسی فرانسه در تهران، 1354 ش/ 1975.
-. **اسرار الشریعه و اطوار الطریقه و انوار الحقیقه**، تصحیح محمد خواجوی، تهران 1362.
-. **جامع الاسرار و منبع الانوار**، تصحیح هانری کربن و عثمان یحیی، تهران.

ابن بزاز اردبیلی، **صفوه الصفا**، تصحیح غلامرضا طباطبانی مجد، تهران، 1376.

ابوحیان، علی بن محمد توحیدی، **البصائر و الذخائر**، بیروت: 988؛ 3 ج. دمشق: کتابخانة اطلس و دارلانشاء، 1964.
-. **مقابسات**، به کوشش ه. سندوبی، قاهره: 1929.
اصفهانی، ابونُعیم، **حلیة الاولیاء**، 5 ج.،بیروت، 1967.
افشار، ایرج (ویراستار) **دو رسالهٔ عرفانی در عشق**، فرهنگ ایران زمین، سلسله متون و تحقیقات، تهران: 1359 ش.
احمد جام، شیخ (ژنده پیل)، محمدبن مطهر، **حدیقة الحقیقه**، به کوشش منوچهر ستوده، تهران، بنگاه ترجمه و نشر کتاب، 1343 ش.
ابوالوفا، محی الدین، **الجواهر المضینه في طبقات الحنفیّه**.
این معمار حنبلی بغدادی، **کتاب الفتوّة**، بغداد: مکتبة المثنی، 1985.
ابن معصوم، **سلافة العصر**، قاهره 1906.

ابن عربی، **فتوحات المکیه**، تحقیق و تقدیم عثمان یحیی، تصدیر و مراجعه ابراهیم مدکور، قاهره: 1985.
-. **فصوص الحکم**،متن عربی و ترجمه فارسی، محمد خواجوی، تهران، 1387. درآمد، برگردان متن، توضیح و تحلیل محمد موحد و صمد موحد، تهران، 1385.
-. **مواقعُ النجوم و مطالع أهلّة الأسرار العلوم**، قاهره: 1325/ 1907.
-. **تأویلات**، بیروت: 1968.
-. **رسائل**، مصحح نجیب مایل هروی، تهران، 1367.
-. **التبیرات الالهیه فی اصلاح المملکه الانسانیه**، ترجمه فارسی(جهان انسان شد و انسان جهانی): قاسم انصاری، تهران،1387.
-. **درخت هستی**، ترجمه و توضیح، گل بابا سعیدی، انتشارات زوار، تهران، 1386.

- **دیوان ابن عربی**، شرح وتقدیم نواف الجراح، دار صادر، بیروت، 2007.
- **الاسری الی مقام الاسری**، شرح و توضیح علی باقری، تهران، 1385.
- **الحب و المحبه الاهیه**، ترجمه سید محمد رادمنش، تهران، 1386.

ابن بابویه، ابوجعفر محمدبن علی قمی، **معانی الاخبار**، قم: انتشارات اسلامی 1361 ش/ 1982.
ابن بطوطه، **رحلة ابن بطوطه**، بیروت: دارصادر، 1964.
همان، **سفرنامهٔ ابن بطوطه**، ترجمه به فارسی از محمدعلی موحد، تهران: 1337 ش.

ابن سینا، **الاشارات و التنبیهات**، با حواشی خواجه نصیرالدین طوسی و قطب الدین رازی، 3 ج. تهران: 1330 ش/ 1951.
ابن جوزی، عبدالرحمن، **نقدالعلم و العلماء أو تلبیس ابلیس**، قاهره: 1982.
ابن خلکان، احمد، **وَفیاتُ الاعْیان و إنباء ابناء الزّمان**، بیروت: 1965.
ابوبکر عبدالله بن زبیر، **المسند**، بیروت: 1988.
ابن الفارض، **دیوان ابن الفارض**، قم، 1411.

ابن فناری، محمد بن حمزه، **مصباح الانس**، تعلیقات میرزا هاشم اشکوری و حسن زاده آملی، تهران، 1363.

ابن منور، محمد، **اسرار التوحید فی مقامات شیخ ابوسعید**، به کوشش والنتین ژوکوفسکی، سن پترزبورگ 1899؛ ویرایش مجدد توسط احمد بهمنیار، تهران: 1313 ش؛ ویرایش دیگر از ذبیح الله صفا، تهران: 1332 ش/ 1953. ویرایش جدید توسط محمدرضا شفیعی کدکنی، 2 مجلد، شامل بررسیها و یادداشتها، تهران: 1366 ش. ترجمهٔ عربی به اهتمام ا. قندیل، قاهره: 1966. ترجمهٔ فرانسه از م. آشِنا زیر عنوان پاریس: 1974.
ابن ملقین، **طبقات الاولیاء**، به کوشش نورالدین شریبه، مصر: 1973.
ادریس، احمد، **سیر هندی مبین فارسی ادبی**، دهلی، 1988.

اسدی طوسی، ابونصر علی بن احمد، **گرشاسب نامه**، به کوشش حبیب یغمائی، ج. 2، تهران، 1354 ش. استخری، احسان الله علی، **اصول تصوف**، تهران: کانون معرفت، 1338 ش/ 1959.
سیری لاهیجی،شمس الدین محمد، **اسرار الشهود**، تصحیح سید علی آل داود، تهران، 1368.
اعوانی، غلامرضا، **مجموعه مقالات مولانا پژوهی، دفتر 1-6**، تهران، 1386.
افندی، میرزا عبدالله، **ریاض العلما**، قم، 1369 ش.
افشاری، مهران(مصحح)، فتوت نامه ها و رسائل خاکساریه، تهران، 1382.
افلاکی، شمس الدین احمد، **مناقب العارفین**، 2ج.، آنکارا: 1959-1961.
افصح زاد، اعلاخان، **نقد و برسی آثار و شرح احوال جامی**، میراث مکتوب، تهران، 1378.
- **مجموعه رسائل فارسی**، تصحیح محمد سرور مولانی، تهران، 1372.

اکبرآبادی، ولی محمد، **شرح مثنوی مولوی**، به اهتمام ن. مایل هروی، تهران، 1383.

الهی اردبیلی، **شرح گلشن راز**، تصحیح محمد رضا برزگر خالقی، عفت کرباسی، تهران، 1376.

انصاری، عبدالله، **منازل السّائرین**، به کوشش عبدالغفور روان فرهادی، تهران: انتشارات مولی، 1361 ش.
-. **طبقات الصّوفیه**، به کوشش عبدالحی حبیبی، کابل 1341. [نیز] به کوشش محمد سروَر مولایی، تهران: 1362 ش.
-. **سخنان پیرهرات**، به کوشش محمد جواد شریعت، چاپ سوم، تهران: 1361 ش/ 1982.
-. **منازل السائرین**: متن عربی با مقایسه با متن **علل المقامات و صد میدان**، ترجمهٔ دری **منازل السّائرین** و **علل المقامات** و شرح کتاب از روی آثار پیر هرات، به کوشش روان فرهادی، کابل: 1350 ش، تجدید چاپ، تهران: مولی 1361 ش/ 1982.
انقروی، اسماعیل، **شرح کبیر**، پانزده ج، ترجمه عصمت ستارزاده، تهران، 1374
انوار، قاسم، **کلیات قاسم انوار**، به کوشش سعید نفیسی، تهران، کتابخانهٔ سنائی، 1377 ش/ 1958.
اورنگ آبادی، نظام الدین، **نظام القلوب**، دهلی: مطبعهٔ مجتبائی 1891.

باخرزی، ابوالمفاخر، **اَورادُ الاحباب و فُصوصُ الاداب**، 2 ج. **فصوص الاداب**، به کوشش ایرج افشار، تهران: 1345 ش.

بحرالعلوم، محمد، **تفسیر عرفانی مثنوی معنوی**، شش ج، تهران، 1384.

بحرانی، ابو محمد الحسن بن علی، **تحف العقول**، تصحیح علی اکبر غفاری، قم، 1414.

بخاری، شرف الدین، **نام حق**، لکهنو: 1889.

بخش، محمد، **مثنوی نیرنگ عشق پنجابی**، جهلوم: ملك غلام نور 1964.
بدخشانی، مقبول بیگ (ویراستار)، **تاریخ ادبیات مسلمانان پاك وهند**، چهارم: فارسی ادب 2 (1526-1707)، لاهور، 1971.
بدوی، عبدالرحمن، **مؤلفات الغزالی**، 2 ج، قاهره: 1961.
-. **شهیدة العشق، رابعه العَدَویه**، قاهره: النهضه، 1946.
براون، ادوارد، **از سعدی تا جامی**، ترجمهٔ علی اصغر حکمت، تهران: 1339 ش/ 1960.
برتلس، یوگنی اِدوارد، **تصوف و ادبیات تصوف**، ترجمه به فارسی از سیروس ایزدی، تهران: امیرکبیر، 1355 ش/ 1976.

بغدادی، اسماعیل پاشا، **هدیة العارفین: اسماءُ المؤلفین و آثار الممنصّفین**، 2 ج.، استانبول: 1951-1955.
بغوی، ابو محمد الحسین بن مسعود، **مصباح السّنه**، 4 ج.، بیروت: 1987.
بقاعی، برهان الدین، **مَصرَع التّصوف و تنبیه الغَبّی إلي تکفیر ابن عربی**، مصر: دارالتقوی، 1989.
بقلی، روزبهان، **مشرب الارواح**، تصحیح نظیف محمد خواجه، استانبول، 1973.
بهاءالدین، بن مولانا جلالالدین، **ولدنامه**، تصحیح جلال الدین همائی، تهران.

بینای مطلق، محمود، **نظم و راز**، هرمس، تهران، 1385.

پارسا، محمد، **قدسیه: کلمات بهاءالدین نقشبند**، تهران: کتابخانه طهوری، 1354/ 1975.

پازوکی، شهرام، **مجموعه مقالات در باره شاه نعمت الله ولی**، تهران 1383.
- **عرفان، اسلام وایران – بزرگداشت شیخ شهاب الدین سهروردی**، تهران، 1385.
- **حکمت، هنر و زیبائی در اسلام**، تهران، 1385.

پور جوادی، نصرالله، **زبان حال**، تهران، 1385.
- **پژوهشهای عرفانی**، تهران، 1385.
- **دو مجدد**، تهران، 1381.
- **نسیم انس**، تهران 1384.
- **اشراق و عرفان**، تهران، 1380.
- **بوی جان**، تهران، 1372.
- **مکاتبات خواجه احمد غزالی با عین القضاة همدانی**، تهران: انتشارات خانقاه نعمت اللهی، 1356 ش.
- **زندگی و آثار شیخ ابوالحسن بُستی**، تهران: 1364 ش/ 1985.
- **سلطان طریقت**، تهران، 1358.
- **مکاتبات خواجه احمد غزالی با عین القضات همدانی**، تهران، 1356.

تابنده گنابادی، حاج سلطان حسین، **نابغه علم و عرفان**، تهران.

ترکه اصفهانی، صائن الدین، **عقل وعشق یا مناظره عقل و عشق**، تصحیح اکرم جودی نعمتی، تهران، میراث مکتوب.
- **تمهید القواعد**، مقدمه و تصحیح سید جلال الدین آشتیانی، تهران، 1360.

تنکابنی، محمد، **قصص العلما**، تهران.

تهانوی، محمدعلی بن محمد حمید، **کشّاف الفنون**، به کوشش ا. اسپرنگر، کلکته: 1278/ 1861.

جامی، عبدالرحمن، **نفحات الانس**، به کوشش محمود عابدی، تهران: انتشارات اطلاعات، 1370 ش؛ [نیز] به کوشش مهدی توحیدی پور، تهران: 1336 ش.
- **تحفة الاحرار**، لکهنو، تاج کمار، 1966.
- **نقد النصوص فی شرح نقش الفصوص**، به کوشش ویلیام چیتیك، موسسه پژوهشی حکمت و فلسفه ایران، تهران، 1381.
- **تائیه**، تصحیح صادق خورشا، تهران، میراث مکتوب.
- **دیوان جامی**، تصحیح اعلا خان افصح زاد، تهران، میراث مکتوب.
- **مثنوی هفت اورنگ**(2ج)، تصحیح جابلقا داد علیشاه و دیگران، تهران، میراث مکتوب.
- **نامه ها و منشات جامی**، تصحیح عصام الدین اورون بایف و اسرار رحمانف، تهران، میراث مکتوب.
- **سلامان و ابسال**، تصحیح زهرا مهاجری، تهران، 1376.

جرجانی، علی بن محمد، **کتاب التعریفات**، بیروت: 1969.
جغتای، محمد عبدالله، **نیرنگ عشق کا ایك قلمی نسخه**، مجلة کالج اورینتال، 74 (اوت 1943)، صص، 54-56.
جندی، محی الدین، **شرح فصوص الحکم**، به کوشش سید جلال الدین آشتیانی، مشهد: دانشگاه، 1361 ش/ 1982.
جهانگیری، محسن، **محی الدین ابن عربی: چهرهٔ برجستهٔ عرفان اسلامی**، تهران: 1359 ش/ 1980.

جوادی آملی، عبدالله، **حماسه و عرفان**، تهران، 1384.
-. **اسرار عبادات**، تهران، 1381.
-. **اسرار الصلوه**، قم، 1383.
-. **ادب فنای مقربان**، 5جلد، قم، 1381-1387.
-. **تحریر تمهید القواعد**، تهران، 1372.
-. **سرچشمه اندیشه**، قم، 1386.

جوینی، عطاملك، **تاریخ جهانگشا**، به کوشش محمد قزوینی، لاید، بریل/ لندن، موقوفه گیب، 1912-1937.
چشتی، عبدالرحمن، **مرآت الحقایق**، لندن: نسخه خطی موزهٔ بریتانیا، Or. 1883.
چشتی، ن. ا.، **تحقیقات چشتی**، لاهور، هیأت ادبی پنجابی، 1964-1937.
چرخی، یعقوب، **رسالة انسیه**، دهلی، مطبعة مجتبائی، 1924.

حافظ، **دیوان خواجه شمس الدین محمد حافظ**، به کوشش پرویز ناتل خانلري، ج. دوم، تهران: 1362 ش.
حاجي خليفه، مصطفي بن عبدالله كاتب چلبي، **كشف الظنون عَن اسامي الكُتُب و الفنون**، 2 ج. استانبول: 1310.
حاكمي، اسماعيل، **سماع در تصوف اسلام**، تهران: 1368.
حبشي، عبدالله، **الصّوفيّه و الفقها في اليمن**، صنعا: 1976.
حزین لاهیجی، رسائل، تصحیح علی اوجبی و دیگران، تهران، میراث مکتوب.

حسن زاده آملی، حسن، **نور علی نور – در ذکر و ذاکر و مذکور**، قم، 1385.
-. **معرفت نفس**، دو جلد، تهران، 1361.
-. **انسان در عرف عرفان**، تهران، انتشارات سروش.
-. **هزار و یک نکته**، مرکز نشر فرهنگی رجاء، قم.
-. **کلمه علیا در توقیفیت اسماء الحسنی**، انتشارات دفتر تبلیغات اسلامی، قم.
-. **انسان کامل از دیدگاه نهج البلاغه**، انتشارات قیام، قم.
حلاج، منصور، **دیوان حلاج**، به کوشش لوئي ماسينيون، پاريس: 1929؛ [نيز] به كوشش ك.م. شيبي، بغداد، 1974.
حکمت، نصر الله، **متافیزیک خیال در گلشن راز شبستری**، تهران.
-. **حکمت و هنر در عرفان ابن عربی عربی**، فرهنگستان هنر، تهران، 1384.

خاتون آبادی، عبدالحسین، **وقایع السنین**، تهران، 1352ش/ 1973.

خان، م. ا.، **ادبيات فارسي در ميان هندوان**، تهران، 1371 ش/ 1992.
-. "فتوت نامه از مير سيد علي همداني"، **معارف اسلامي** 10 و 11 (1970)، صص. 32-39.
خاقاني شرواني، **ديوان خاقاني شرواني**، تهران: انتشارات ارسطو، 1362 ش.
خانقاهي، ابونصر طاهر، **گزيده در تصوف و اخلاق**، تهران: 1347 ش/ 1968.
خرمشاهی، بهاءالدین و سیامک مختاری، **قرآن و مثنوی**، تهران، 1382.

امام خمینی، روح الله، **دیوان امام**، تهران، 1372.
-. **سر الصلوه- معراج السالكين و صلوه العارفين**، تهران، 1369.
-. **شرح حديث جنود عقل و جهل**، تهران، 1377.
-. **شرح دعای سحر**، تهران، 1386.
-. **شرح چهل حديث**، تهران، 1371.

-. **مصباح الهدايه**، ترجمه سيد احمد فهری، انتشارات پيام آزادی، تهران، مقدمه سيد جلال الدين آشتيانی، تهران، 1372.

خُنجي- اصفهاني، فضل الله بن روزبهان، **تاريخ عالم آراي اميني**، به كوشش جان وودز، لندن، انجمن سلطنتي آسياني، 1992.
خواجوی، محمد، **دو صدرالدين، قونوی و ملا صدرا**، تهران، 1378.
خوارزمی، كمال الدين حسين، **جواهرالاسرار و زواهرالانوار**، تصحيح محمد جواد شريعت، اصفهان، 1366.
خوافي، احمد فصيح، **مجمل فصيحي**، به كوشش محمد فرخ، 3 ج.، مشهد: 1339-1341 ش.
خواندمير، غياث الدين، **حبيب السَّيَر**، 4 ج.، به كوشش جلال الدين هماني، تهران: خيام 1332 ش.
خوانساري، محمد باقر، **روضات الجنّات في احوال العلماء و السّادات**، 8 ج.، تهران: 1349-1351 ش.
خونی، مصطفی، **شرح دعای صباح**، تصحيح اكبر ايرانی قمی، تهران، ميراث مكتوب.
دامادي، سيد محمد، **ابوسعيد نامه: زندگي نامة ابوسعيد ابي الخير**، تهران: 1352 ش/ 1973.
دانش پژوه، محمد تقي (ويراستار)، "سلسلة الاولياء نوربخش" **مجموعه مقالات تقديمي به هانري كربن**، به كوشش سيد حسين نصر، تهران: مؤسسه مطالعات اسلامي، دانشگاه مگيل، شعبة تهران، 1977.
داراشكوه، **مجمع البحرين**، كلكته، 1929.
همو، **ديوان داراشكوه**، به كوشش احمد نبي خان، لاهور: دانشگاه پنجاب، 1969.
دده، ثاقب مصطفي، **سفينة نفيسة مولويان**، قاهره: مطبعة وَهَبيه، 1283/ 1866-1867.
دباغ، عبدالرحمن، **مشارق انوار القلوب و مفاتيح اسرار الغيوب**، بيروت: دار صادر، داربيروت، 1959.
دشتي، علي، **قلمرو سعدي**، تهران: كيهان، 1338 ش.
دولت آبادي، عزيز، **سخنوران آذربايجان**، 2 ج. تبريز: 1357 ش.
دهباشی، مهدی، **شرح رباعيات فلسفی و عرفانی علامه دوانی**، هرمس، تهران، 1387.

ديلمي، ابوالحسن علي بن محمد، **سيرة شيخ الكبير ابو عبدالله بن خفيف شيرازي**، ترجمه به فارسي توسط ركن الدين يحيي بن جنيد شيرازي، به كوشش آنماري، شيمل، آنكارا: 1955، تجديد چاپ، تهران: انتشارات بابك 1984.

-. **كتاب عطف الالف المألوف علي الأم المعطوف**، به كوشش ژان- كلود واده؛ مجلد بيستم از Testes et Traductions d'Auteurs Orientaux، قاهره، مؤسسة فرانسوي باستان شناسي شرقي، 1962.

-. **الفردوس بمأثور الخطاب**، بيروت، 1986.

ديناني، غلامحسين ابراهيمي، **شعاع انديشه و شهود در فلسفة سهروردي**، تهران: حكمت، 1364 ش.

-. **فلسفة سهروردي**، تهران، انتشارات حكمت، 1364 ش/ 1985.

-. **دفتر عقل و آيت عشق**، سه جلد، تهران، 1380.

ذهبي، محمدبن احمد، **سيَرُ الأعلام النُبلاء**، بيروت: 1981-1985.

رجاني بخارائي، احمد علي، **فرهنگ اشعار حافظ**، ج. 2، تهران: 1364 ش.

رازي، نجم الدين، **مرصاد العباد من المبدأ إلي المَعاد**، ويرايش محمد امين رياحي، تهران، 1365 ش.

-. **رساله عشق و عقل**، تصحيح تقى تفضلى، تهران، 1352.

رازي، شمس الدين محمد بن قيس، **المعجم في معابير اشعار العجم**، به كوشش محمد قزويني و مدرس رضوي، تهران، بي تا.

راوندي، محمدبن علي بن سليمان، **راحة الصّدور و آيةّ السّرور در تاريخ آل سلجوق**، تهران: اميركبير، 1364 ش.

رشيد الدين فضل الله، **جامع التواريخ**، 2 ج. به كوشش بهمن كريمي، تهران: دنياي كتاب، 1362 ش/ 1983.

ركن الدين شيرازى، **نصوص الخصوص فى ترجمه الفصوص**، به اهتمام رجبعلى مظلومى، ، تهران، 1359.

روزبهان بقلي شيرازي، **عرائس البيان في حقيقة القران**، لكهنو، 1310/ 1893.

-. **روزبهان نامه**، سلسله انتشارات انجمن آثار ملي، 60، تهران، 348 ش/ 1969.

-. **كتاب مشرب الارواح**، به كوشش نظيف حوجا، استانبول: مطبعة دانشكدة ادبيات، 1974.

-. **رسالة القدس و غلطات السّالكين**، به كوشش جواد نوربخش، تهران: خانقاه نعمت اللهي، 1351 ش/ 1972.

-. **شرح شطحيات**، به كوشش هانري كربن، گنجينة نوشته هاي ايراني، 12، تهران: انستيتو ايران و فرانسه،1344.

-. **عبهر العاشقين**، به كوشش هانري كربن و محمد معين، گنجينة نوشته هاي ايراني 8، تهران: انجمن ايران شناسي فرانسه در تهران، 1958؛ تجديد چاپ، تهران: انتشارات منوچهري 1365 ش/ 1981.

زرين كوب، عبدالحسين، **فرار از مدرسه: دربارة زندگي و انديشة ابوحامد غزالي**، تهران: اميركبير، 1364 ش.

- **بحر در کوزه**، تهران، 1366.
- **سر نی**، تهران، 1364.
- **جستجو در تصوف ایران**، تهران: امیرکبیر، 1357 ش.
- **دنبالهٔ جستجو در تصوف ایران**، تهران: امیرکبیر، 1362 ش/ 1983.
- **تصوف ايراني در منظر تاريخي آن**، ترجمهٔ مجدالدين كيواني، تهران: علمي، 1383 ش.
- **پله پله ملاقات با خدا**، تهران
- **شعله طور**، در باره زندگی و اندیشه حلاج، تهران.
- **پیر گنجه در جستجوی نا کجا آباد**، در زندگی و اندیشه نظامی، تهران.
- **در باره زندگی و اندیشه حافظ**، تهران.
- **صدای بال سیمرغ**، در باره زندگی و اندیشه عطار، تهران.
- **دیدار با کعبه جان**، در باره زندگی و اندیشه خاقانی، تهران.
- **از کوچه رندان**، در باره زندگی و اندیشه حافظ، تهران.

زاهدي، حسين بن شيخ ابدال، **سلسله النّسب صفويه**، بيروت، 1924.
زَبيدي، مرتضي محمد بن محمد حسيني، **إتحاف الساده المتقين بشرح اسرار احياء علوم الدين**، 10 ج.، تجديد چاپ، بيروت، بي تا؛ قاهره: 1311.

زمانی،کریم، **میناگر عشق ـ شرح موضوعی مثنوی**، تهران،1385.
-، **شرح جامع مثنوی معنوی**، تهران، 1372.

سبزواري، هادي، **اسرارُ الحکم** ، مقدمه و حواشی ابوالحسن شعرانی، تهران: 1362 ش.

سجادی، سید جعفر، **لغات و اصطلاحات و تعبیرات عرفانی**، تهران 1362.
سجادی، سید ضیاءالدین، **مقدمه ای بر مبانی عرفان و تصوف**، تهران، 1385.
سر گلزایی، علی اکبر، **قرآن در مثنوی**، تهران، 1386.
سرمست، سچال، **رسالُ سندي**، به كوشش عثمان علي انصاري، كراچي، 1958.
سرور، محمد غلام **حديقة الاولياء**، لاهور: بنياد كتابهاي اسلامي، 1906.

همو، **خزينة الاصفياء**، 2 ج. كانپور: نول كِشُور، 1894.

سروش، عبدالکریم، **قصة ارباب معرفت**، تهران: معراج، 1373 ش/ 1994.
- **قمار عاشقانه**، تهران.

سعدي، **كليات سعدي**، به كوشش محمدعلي فروغي، تهران: اميركبير، 1366 ش/ 1987.
سلطانی، محمد باقر، **رهبران طریقت و عرفان**، تهران، انتشارات حقیقت، 1379.
سهيم، هايده، "خاطرات يهوديان ايران"، **ايران نامه**، 1/15 (زمستان 1997)، صص. 51-76.
سيد عبدالله، **ادبيات فارسي مين هندونن كاحصّه**، لاهور: دانشگاه پنجاب، 1967.
سمسار، محمد حسن، "فرمان نويسي در دورهٔ صفويه"، **بررسيهاي تاريخي** 2 (1346 ش)، صص. 127-152.
سمناني، علاءالدوله، **ديوان كامل اشعار فارسي و عربي علاءالدوله سمناني**، به كوشش

عبدالرفیع حقیقت، تهران: 1364 ش/ 1985.
سپهسالار، فریدون بن احمد، **مولوي و حلقة او** (ترجمه به ترکي از) تحسین یازیجي، استانبول: ترجمان، 1977.
سرّاج، ابونصر، **اللمع في التصوف**، به کوشش رینولد نیکلسن، لندن/ لایدن: 1914.

سرهندي، احمد، مکتوبات، ج. 1، لاهور، شرکت نور: 1964.
-. **مکتوبات امام رباني**، لکهنو: 1989.
سعد، جمال الدین لطف الله بن ابي سعید، **حالات و سخنان شیخ ابوسعید ابي الخیر**، به کوشش و. ژوکوفسکي، سن پطرزبورگ، 1899.
سعیدی، گل بابا، **فرهنگ اصطلاحات عرفانی ابن عربی**، تهران 1384.
سمعاني، احمد، **روح الارواح في شرح اسماء الملك الفتاح**، به کوشش نجیب مایل هروي، تهران: شرکت انتشارات علمي و فرهنگي، 1368 ش/ 1989.
سنائي، ابوالمجد مجدود بن آدم، **حدیقة الحقیقه و شریعة الطریقه**، به کوشش مدرس رضوي، تهران: 1339 ش.
-. **سیرالعباد الي المعاد**، نسخۀ خطي بغداتلي و هبي (استانبول)، شم. 1672.
-. **مکاتیب سنائي**، به کوشش نظیر احمد، تهران: 1362 ش/ 1983.
-. **دیوان سنائي غزنوي**، به کوشش محمد مدرس رضوي، تهران: 1354 ش/ 1975.
سیستاني، امیراقبال، **چهل مجلس** علاء الدولۀ سمناني، به کوشش عبدالرفیع حقیقت، تهران: 1358 ش/ 1979.
سُبکي، تاج الدین ابونصر عبدالوهّاب بن علي، **طبقات الشّافعیة الکبري**، تجدید چاپ، بیروت: دارالمعارف.

سُلمي، عبدالرّحمن، **جوامع آداب الصّوفیه و عیوبُ النفس و مداواته**، به کوشش اي. کولبرگ، اورشلیم: 1976.
-. **طبقات الصّوفیه**، به کوشش ن. شریبه، قاهره: 1953.
-. **رسالة الملامتیه**، به کوشش ابوالعلا العفیفي در الملامتیه و الصّوفیه و اهل الفتوّة، قاهره: 1945.

سلطان ولد، **معارف**، به کوشش نجیب مایل هروی، تهران، 1367.
سلطان ولد، **دیوان ترکي سلطان ولد**، استانبول: 1341/ 1925.
-. **دیوان سلطان ولد**، به کوشش سعید نفیسي، تهران: 1338 ش/ 1959.
-. **مثنوي ولدي به بحر خفیف معروف به ولدنامه**، به کوشش ج. همائي، تهران: اقبال، 1315 ش.
-. **رباب نامه**، به اهتمام علی سلطانی گرد فرامرزی، تهران ، 1359.

سهروردي، ابوالنّجیب، آداب المریدین، ویرایش عمربن محمد بن احمد شرکان، تهران: 1363 ش].
سهروردي، شهاب الدین ابوحفص عمر، **عوارف المعارف**، بیروت: دارالکتاب العربي، 1983.
سهروردی، شهاب الدین، **مجموعه مصنفات**، ج3، تصحیح سید حسین نصر، تهران، 1355، لغت موران، تصحیح نصرالله پور جوادی، تهران، 1385.

ـ. مونس العشاق، تصحیح و توضیح نجیب مایل هروی، تهران، 1378.

شاه ابوسعید، **هدایة الطالبین**، کراچي؛ 1385/ 1965.

شاه داعي شیرازي، **کلیات شاه داعي شیرازي**، به کوشش محمد دبیر سیاقي، تهران: 1339 ش.

شاه نعمت الله ولي، **کلیات شاه نعمت الله ولي**، به کوشش جواد نوربخش، تهران، 1361 ش.

ـ. **رسائل حضرت سید نورالدین شاه نعمت الله ولي**، 4 ج. به کوشش جواد نوربخش، تهران: انتشارات خانقاه نعمت اللهي، 1358 ش.

شاه ولي الله، **انتباه في سلاسل اولياء الله**، ترجمهٔ محمد اسحاق صدّیق، دنوبند: کُتب خانه رحمیّه، بي تا.

شایگان، داریوش، "محمد داراشکوه، بنیان گذار عرفان تطبیقي"، **ایران نامه** 2/8 (1990).

شبلي نعماني هندي، **شعر العجم**، ترجمه به فارسي از داعي گیلاني، 5 ج.، تهران: دنیاي کتاب، 1363 ش/ 1984.

شبستري، محمود، **مجموعهٔ آثار شیخ محمود شبستري**، به کوشش صمد موحد، تهران: 1371 ش/ 1982.

ـجریان، رضا، **شروح مثنوی**(شرح فارسی و موجود در ایران)، تهران، 1386.

یف کاشانی، ملاحبیب الله، **خواص و مفاهیم اسماءالله الحسنی**، تهران، 1385.

شفیعی کدکنی، محمد رضا، **قلندریه در تاریخ**، تهران، 1387.

ـ. **تازیانه های سلوک**، تهران، 1372.

ـ. **حالات و سخنان ابو سعید ابوالخیر**، تهران، 1366.

ـ. **در اقلیم روشنانی**، تفسیر چند غزل از سنائی، تهران، 1373.

ـ. **دفتر روشنانی**، تهران، 1384.

ـ. **نوشته بر دریا**، از میراث عرفانی ابوالحسن خرقانی، تهران، 1384.

ـ. **چشیدن طعم وقت**، از میراث عرفانی ابو سعید ابوالخیر، تهران، 1385.

ـ. **زبان شعر در نثر عرفانی**، تهران.

ـ. **در هر گز و همیشه انسان**، از میراث عرفانی خواجه عبدالله انصاری، تهران.

ـ. **درویش ستیهنده**، از میراث عرفانی شیخ جام، تهران.

شمس تبریزی، محمد بن علی، **مقالات شمس تبریزی**، تصحیح محمد علی موحد، تهران، 1369.

شهاب، م. ح. **اولیاء بهوَلپور**، بهولپور: فرهنگستان اردو، 1976.

شیرازي، نظام الدین احمد، **حدیقة السلاطین**، حیدرآباد، ادارهٔ ثقافت و تمدن دکن، ایوان اردو، 1961.

شيرازي، زين الدين علي عبدي بيگ، **تكملة الاخبار**، به كوشش عبدالحسين نوائي، تهران: نشر ني 1369 ش.
شوشتري، قاضي نورالله، **مجالس المؤمنين**، 2 ج. تهران: اسلاميه، 1354 ش.
شهرزوري، شمس الدين، **نُزهة الارواح و روضة الافراح في تاريخ الحكما و الفلاسفه**، حيدرآباد: 1976.
شفيع صفارى، محمد، فرهنگ لغات و تعبيرات مثنويهاى سنايى، تهران، 1378.

شمس تبريزى، محمد، **مقالات شمس تبريزى**، با مقدمه، تنقيح و تعليق محمد على موحد، تهران.
شهاب الدين احمد، روح الارواح **فى شرح اسماء الملك الفتاح**، تهران، 1384.
شيبي، كامل مصطفي، **الفكر الشّيعي و النّزعات الصّوفيه حتي مَطلع قرن الثاني عشر الهجري**، بغداد: 1386/ 1966.
شيروانى، حاج زين العابدين، **حدائق السياحه**، تهران، 1348.

صالح عليشاه، حاج شيخ محمد حسن، **پند صالح**، تهران.
صائب تبريزي، **كليات صائب تبريزي**، به كوشش اميري فيروز كوهي، تهران: خيام، 1373 ش/ 1944.
صدوقى سها، منوچهر، **تاريخ حكماء و عرفاى متاخر**، تهران، 1381.
صديق، عيسي، **تاريخ فرهنگ ايران**، تهران: انتشارات دانشسراي عالي، 1342 ش/ 1963.
صديق بهزادى، ماندانا، **كتابشناسى مولوى**، تهران، 1380.
صفا، ذبيح الله، **تاريخ ادبيات در ايران**، 5 ج، تهران، 1331-1364 ش.
صفوى، سيد سلمان، **عرفان عملى مسلمين**، تهران، 1371ش.
-. **عرفان و فلسفه**، تهران، 1376ش.
-. **ساختار كلى دفتر سوم مثنوى مولوى**، آينه ميراث، تهران، پاييز 1386.
-. **ساختار كلى دفتر ششم مثنوى مولوى**، آينه ميراث، تهران، پاييز 1386.
-. **اخلاق از نظر مولانا**، تهران، www.iranianstudies.org.1386
-. **نسبت موسيقى و عرفان**، آينه خيال، فرهنگستان هنر، تهران، تير 1387.

صفوي، ميرزا محمد خليل مرعشي، **مجمع التواريخ**، به كوشش ع. اقبال، تهران: 1328 ش.
صليبا، جميل، **تاريخ الفلسفةِ العربيّه**، بيروت: 1986.
صرّاف، مرتضي (ويراستار)، **آيين جوانمردي**، تهران: 1363 ش.

طوسى، خواجه نصيرالدين، **آغاز وانجام**، مقدمه شرح وتعليقات آيت الله حسن زاده آملى، تهران، 1366.
-. **اوصاف الاشراف**، تهران، 1369.

عبّادي، قطب الدين منصور، **التّصفيه في احوال المتصوّفه**، تهران: 1347 ش/ 1968.
عراقي، فخرالدين، رسالة **لمعات و رسالة اصطلاحات**، به كوشش جواد نوربخش، تهران: انتشارات خانقاه نعمت اللهي: 1353 ش.

غسیران، عفیف (ویراستار) **مصنفات عین القضاة همدانی**، تهران: دانشگاه تهران، 1341 ش.
عصار، سید محمد کاظم، **مجموعه آثار عصار**، تهران، 1376.
عطار، فرید الدین، **دیوان غزلیات و قصائد**، به کوشش سعید نفیسی، نهران،1339ش. ت. تفضلی، تهران: 1345 ش. شفیعی کدکنی.
ـ **الهي نامه**، به کوشش هلموت ریتر، تهران: 1359 ش/1980. شفیعی کدکنی، تهران.
ـ **مصیبت نامه**، به کوشش نوراني وصال، تهران: 1356 ش.
ـ **تذکرة الاولياء**، به کوشش ر. نیکلسن، با مقدمه محمد قزوینی، تهران، بی تا.
ـ **منطق الطیر**، بتصحیح و مقدمه و تعلیقات و حواشی دکتر محمد جواد مشکور، تهران،1366ش. شفیعی کدکنی، تهران، 1383.
اـ **سرار نامه**، ویرایش سید صادق گوهرین، تهران،1338ش،ویرایش محمد ابراهیمی، تهران، 1376ش. شفیعی کدکنی، تهران.
ـ **مختار نامه**، شفیعی کدکنی، تهران 1358ش.
ـ **مصیبت نامه**، دکتر نورانی وصال، تهران،1338ش. شفیعی کدکنی، تهران.

علامي، ابوالفضل، **آيين اكبري**، به كوشش، اچ. بلوخمان، دوازدهم: **ببيليوتكا اينديكا**، شم. 58، كلكته 1872-1827.
علوی، مهوش السادات، **مولانا خداوندگار طریقت عشق، تهران**، تهران، 1376.

امام علی بن ابی الطالب، **نهج البلاغه**، مصحح محمد دشتی، قم، 1408.
امام علی بن الحسین زین العابدین، **صحیفه سجادیه**، با ترجمه فارسی حکیم الهی قمشه ای، تهران 1385.
عیدروس، عبدالقادربن شیخ بن عبدالله علوي، **تعريف الأحياء بفضائل الإحياء**، چاپ شده در حواشي **احياء علوم الدين**، قاهره: النهضه: 1982.

غزالي، ابوحامد محمد بن محمد، **احياء علوم الدين**، 4 ج.، قاهره: 1352 ش/ 1933.
ـ **قانون التأويل**، به كوشش محمد زاهد الكوثري، قاهره: 1940/1359.
ـ **مشكوة الانوار**، به كوشش ابوالعلا عفيفي، قاهره: 1964/1383.
ـ **ميزان العمل**، به كوشش سليمان دنيا، قاهره: 1964.
ـ **كيمياي سعادت**، به كوشش احمد آرام، ج. 2، تهران، 1334 ش.
ـ **مقصد اقصي في شرح معاني اسماء الله الحسني**، بيروت: 1971.
ـ **منهاج العابدين الى جنه رب العالمين**، ترجمه عمر بن عبدالجبار سعدی ساوی، مقدمه و تصحیح و تعلیق از احمد شریعتی، تهران، 1365ش.

غزالي، احمد، **سوانح**، به كوشش هلموت ريتر، **ببيليوتكا اسلاميكا** 15، استانبول: 1942.
غراب، محمود، **شرح فصوص الحكم**، دمشق: 1985.
غفاري قزويني، قاضي احمد، **تاريخ جهان آراء**، به كوشش حسن نراقي، تهران: كتاب فروشي حافظ، 1342 ش.
غني، قاسم، **بحث در آثار و افكار و احوال حافظ: تاريخ تصوف در اسلام و تطورات و تحولات مختلف آن از صدر اسلام تا عصر حافظ**، 2 ج.، ج. 3، تهران: زوار، 1977.
هرمس، تهران، 1386.

غنيمت كنجاهي، **ديوان غنيمت**، به كوشش گ. ر. عزيز، لاهور، 1958.
-. **نيرنگ عشق: مثنوي غنيمت**، گ. ر. عزيز، لاهور: هيأت ادبي پنجاب، 1962.

فراهي، ابونصر، **نصاب الصبيان**، به كوشش علي بن نظر علي، چاپ سنگي، تبريز: 1890/1308.
فارسي، عبدالغافر، **الحقلة الاولي مِن تاريخ نيشابور المنتخب مِن السياق**، به كوشش محمد كاظم محمودي، قم: 1403.
فرزام، حميد، **تحقيق در احوال و نقد آثار و افكار شاه نعمت الله ولى**، تهران، 1374.

فروزانفر، بديع الزمان، **شرح مثنوي شريف**، تهران: دانشگاه تهران، 1346-1348 ش.
-. **شرح احوال و نقد و تحليل آثار شيخ فريد الدين محمد عطار نيشابوري**، تهران: دهخدا، 1353 ش.
-. "سعدي و سهروردي"، **سعدي نامه**، به كوشش حبيب يغماني، تهران: وزارت فرهنگ، 1362 ش.
-. **احاديث مثنوي**، تهران: اميركبير، 1361 ش.
-. **مجموعه مقالات و اشعار بديع الزمان فروزانفر**، [به كوشش عنايت الله مجيدي] تهران، دهخدا، 1351 ش.

فرغاني، سعيد الدين، **مشارق الدّراري**، به كوشش سيدجلال آشتياني، مشهد: چاپخانهٔ دانشگاه فردوسي، 1357 ش.
فناري، حمزه، **مصباح الانس**، ترجمهٔ فارسي، محمد خواجوي، تهران: انتشارات مولي، 1373 ش.
قادري، محيي الدين، **حيات ميرمؤمن**، حيدرآباد: ادارهٔ ادبيات اردو، 1941.
قاسمي، م.، "شرح آواز پرجبرئيل"، **معارف 1**، مارس- مه (1984).

قزويني، ميرزا محمد طاهر وحيد، **عباس نامه**، به كوشش ايرج دهقان، تهران: 1329 ش/ 1951.
قزويني، زكريا، **آثار البلاد و اخبار العباد**، بيروت: 1960.
قشيري، ابوالقاسم، **ترجمهٔ رسالهٔ قشيريه**، به كوشش ب. فروزانفر، تهران: 1345 ش. (ترجمهٔ فارسي رساله توسط ابوعلي حسن بن احمد عثماني).
-. **الرّسالة القُشَيريه**، 2 ج.، قاهره: 1912/1330.

قونوى، صدرالدين، **مفتاح الغيب**، تصحيص محمد خواجوى، مولى، تهران، 1374.
-. **شرح الاسماء الحسنى**، مراجعه و تحقيق قاسم تهرانى، بيروت، 2008.08.
-. **النصوص**، تعليقه ميزا هاشم اشكورى و سيد جلال الدين آشتيانى، مشهد، 1400.
-. **فكوك**، تصحيح و ترجمه، محمد خواجوى، تهران، 1371..
-. **النفحات الالهيه**، ترجمه محمد خواجوى، مولى، تهران، 1375.
-. **مرآت العارفين**، ترجمه، تصحيح و تعليق محمد خواجوى، تهران،1387.
كاشانى، عبد الرزاق، **تاويلات**، بيروت، 1978.
-.**اصطلاحات صوفيه**، لندن، 1991.
كاشاني، ملامحسن فيض، **كلمات مكنونه مِن علوم اهل حكمة و المعرفة**، تهران: 1342

ش.
ـ رسالهٔ مِشواق، به کوشش مصطفی فیضي كاشاني، تهران: 1348 ش.
ـ **كليات اشعار مولانا فيض كاشاني**، به كوشش محمد پيمان، تهران: 1354 ش.
ـ **علم اليقين**، 2 ج.، قم، انتشارات بيدار، 1358 ش.
ـ **ده رسالهٔ محقق بزرگ فيض كاشاني**، به كوشش رسول جعفريان، اصفهان: مركز تحقيقات علمي و ديني امام اميرالمؤمنين علي، 1371 ش.
ـ **المحجه البيضاء فى تهذيب الاحياء**، تصحيح على اكبر غفارى، دفتر انتشارات اسلامى، قم.
ـ **سراج السالكين – منتخب مثنوى معنوى مولوى**، تهران، ميراث مكتوب، تهران، 1380.

كاشفي، فخر الدين علي بن حسين واعظ، **رشحات عين الحيات**، 2 ج. به كوشش علي اصغر معينيان، تهران، 1349 ش.
كاشانى، عزالدين محمود، **مصباح الهدايه و مفتاح الكرامه**، مصحح جلال الدين همائى، تهران 1367.
كاظمي موسوي، احمد، "جايگاه علما در حكومت قاجار"، **ايران نامه** 2/15 (1977)، صص. 199-227.
ـ **فتوّت نامهٔ سلطاني**، به كوشش م.ج. محجوب، تهران: بنياد فرهنگ ايران، 1351 ش.
كاكانى، قاسم، **وحدت وجود به روايت ابن عربى و مايستر اكهارت**، هرمس، تهران، 1385.
ـ **خدا محورى**، حكمت، تهران، 1374.
كبري، نجم الدين، **الاصول العشره**، ترجمه به فارسي به توسط عبدالغفار لاري، به كوشش ن. م. هروي، تهران: 1363 ش.
كربلاني، حسين، **روضات الجنان و جنّات الجنان**، به كوشش جعفر سلطان القرّاني، 2 ج.، تهران: 1344-1349 ش.
كلاباذي، ابوبكر محمد، **كتاب التّعرف لمذهب اهل التصوف**، به كوشش آرثر آربري، قاهره: 1934؛ [نيز چاپ مكتبة الكليه الازهريه قاهره: 1980].
كلباسى اشترى، حسين، **هرمس و سنت هرمسى**، تهران، 1386.
كوپريلى، محمد فواد، **صوفيان نخستين در ادبيات تركيه**، ترجمه و توضيح توفيق سبحانى، تهران، 1385.
كياني، محسن، **تاريخ خانقاه در ايران**، تهران: طهوري، 1369 ش.

لاهيجي، محمد، **مفاتيح الاعجاز في شرح گلشن راز**، به كوشش كيوان سميعي، تهران: 1337 ش.
لاهيجي، عبدالرزاق، **ديوان فياض لاهيجي**، به كوشش جليل مسگر نژاد، تهران: دانشگاه علامه طباطبائي، 1373 ش؛ [نيز] به كوشش اميربانو كريمي، تهران: دانشگاه تهران، 1372 ش.
ـ **گوهرمراد**، به كوشش قرباني لاهيجي، تهران: 1372 ش.
لاهوري، عبدالكريم، **شرح سوانح**، نسخهٔ خطي فارسي، 218، دهلي جديد، جامعه مليه اسلاميه.

محرابي كرماني، سعيد، **تذكرة الاولياء محرابي كرماني**، تهران، 1330 ش.
محبوب عليشاه، **خورشيد تابنده**، تهران 1377.
محجوب، محمد جعفر، "فتوت و آيين آن" **صوفي: فصلنامة خانقاه نعمت اللهي**، شم. 11 (1991).

محدث دهلوي بخاري، عبدالحق، **اخبار الاخيارفي الاسرار الابرار**، به كوشش محمد عبدالاحد، دهلي: مطبعة مجتباني، 1913-1914.
مختارپور قهرودی، عليرضا، **آسمان در آيينه**، تجلی قرآن در ديوان كبير مولانا، تهران، 1386.
مغربي، محمدشيرين، **ديوان محمد شيرين مغربي**، به كوشش لئونارد لويزن، تهران: مؤسسه مطالعات اسلامي مگيل، و لندن: مدرسة مطالعات شرقي و آفريقايي، 1993.
ملكی تبريزی، ميرزا جواد آقا، **المراقبات فی اعمال السنه**، اصفهان، 1381.
- **لقاءالله**، قم.
مسعودي، ابي الحسن علي بن حسين، **مروج الذهب و معادن الجوهر**، ترجمة فارسي از ابوالقاسم پاينده، تهران: بنگاه ترجمه و نشر كتاب، 1344 ش.
ميبدي، رشيد الدين، **كشف الاسرار و عُدَة الابرار**، 10 ج.، به كوشش علي اصغر حكمت، تهران: انتشارات دانشگاه، 1331-1339 ش.
ميسَري، حكيم، **دانشنامه**، تهران: 1366 ش/1987.
مينوي، مجتبي (ويراستار)، **احوال و اقوال شيخ ابوالحسن خرقاني و منتخبات نورالعلوم**، تهران: طهوري، 1359 ش/ 1980.
محاسبي، حارث، **المسائل في اعمال القلوب و الجوارح**، قاهره: 1969.
مَقدِسي، ابونصر مطهّربن طاهر، **البَدءُ و التّاريخ**، بيروت.

ملاصدرا، **كسر اصنام الجاهليّه في ردّ علي متصوفه**، به كوشش محمدتقي دانش پژوه، تهران: دانشكدة علوم معقول و منقول، 1340 ش.
- **الحكمةُ المُتعاليه في الاسفار العقليه**، قم: 1344 ش/1965. بيروت، الطبعه الثالثه، 1981.
- **الشّواهدُ الرّبوبيه في المَناهج السّلوكيه**، مشهد، نشّر دانشگاه مشهد، 1346 ش/1967.
- **مشاعر**، متن عربي همراه با ترجمة فارسي و مقدمه وتعليقات به فرانسه توسط هانري كربن، چاپ دوم، تهران: طهوري 1363 ش.

- **عرشيه**، ويرايش و ترجمه [به فارسي] از غلام حسين آهني، اصفهان: كتابخانة شهريار، 1341 ش.
- **سه رساله**، به كوشش سيد حسين نصر، تهران: 1340 ش.
- **مجموعة مقالات**، قم: انتشارات صفوي، بي تا.
- **ايقاظ النائمين**، تصحيح محمد خوانسارى، تهران، 1386.
- **مجموعه اشعار**، تصحيح محمد خواجوى، تهران، چاپ سوم 1386.
- **المبداء و المعاد**، تصحيح سيد جلال الدين آشتيانی، تهران، 1354.
- **المظاهر الالهيه فی اسرار العلوم الكماليه**، تصحيحفتحقيق و مقدمه سيد محمد خامنهای، تهران، 1378.
مجلسي، محمد باقر، **جواهر العقول**، تهران: چاپ سنگي، ناشر نامعلوم، 1303/ 1885.

معصوم علي شاه شيرازي، طرائق الحقايق، به كوشش محمد جعفر محجوب، 3 مجلد، تهران: كتابخانة باراني 1345ش.
ملكی تبريزی، ميرزا جواد آقا، سير الی الله، تهران 1363.
-. اسرار الصلاه، تهران 1366.

ميرداماد، محمد باقر، جذوات، چاپ سنگي، بمبئي، 1884/1302.
-. القبسات، به كوشش مهدي محقق، ت. ايزوتسو، ا. موسوي بهبهاني و ي. ديباجي، با ترجمة انگليسي از توشيهيكو ايزوتسو، سلسله انتشارات حكمت ايراني، شم. 7، تهران: دانشگاه مگيل، مؤسسة مطالعات اسلامي، شعبة تهران، دانشگاه تهران، 1977.
ميرفندرسكي، ابوالقاسم، رسالة صناعيه، در منتخباتي از آثار حكماي الهي ايران، به كوشش سيدجلال آشتياني، تهران: بخش ايران شناسي مؤسسه تحقيقات ايران و فرانسه 1971، 80-59/1.
-. تحفة المريد: شرح قصيدة ميرفندرسكي، به كوشش اكبري ساوي، تهران، ناشر نامعلوم، 1372 ش.
ميرلوحي، سلوةُ الشيعه در ميراث اسلامي ايران، ج. 2، به كوشش رسول جعفريان، قم: كتابخانة عمومي مرعشي نجفي، 1374 ش.
موبد اسفنديار، خسرو، دبستان المذاهب، 2 ج.، تهران، به كوشش رضا زاده ملك، 1362 ش/ 1983.
مفيد يزدي، محمد، جامع مفيدي، 3 ج.، به كوشش ايرج افشار، تهران: اسدي، 1340 ش/ 1961.
محمدي، كاظم، مولانا و دفاع از عقل، تهران: نشر مهدي، 1373 ش/1994.
نشي، ايندرجيت، نامة عشق، به كوشش وحيد قريشي، لاهور: هيأت ادبي پنجاب، 1959.
مكي، ابوطالب، قوت القلوب في معاملات المحبوب، قاهره: 1893-1892/1310.
مدرس، محمدعلي، ريحانة الادب، 8 ج.، تهران: 1346 ش/1967.
منزوي، احمد، فهرست نسخه هاي خطي فارسي، 2 ج.، تهران: 1349 ش/ 1970.
محمد رياض، احوال و آثار و اشعار ميرسيد علي همداني با شش رساله از وي، اسلام آباد: مركز تحقيقات فارسي ايران و پاكستان، 1985.
مدرس رضوي، محمد، احوال و آثار...خواجه نصير الدين طوسي، تهران: انتشارات دانشگاه تهران، 1344 ش.
معين الفقراء، احمد بن محمود، تاريخ ملازاده (يا كتاب ملازاده)، تهران: 1330 ش/ 1961-1960.

موحد، صمد، صفی الدين اردبيلی، تهران، 1381.
محمد علی موحد، تصحيح، مقالات شمس تبريزی، تهران، 1369.
-. شمس تبريزی، تهران، 1375.

مولوی، جلال الدين محمد، ديوان كبير يا كليات شمس، به كوشش بديع الزمان فروزانفر، 10 ج.، تهران: 1346-1336 ش.

-. **دیوان کبیر یا کلیات شمس- نسخه قونیه**- تصحیح توفیق سبحانی- تهران- 1386ش.
-. **مثنوي معنوي**، به کوشش و ترجمهٔ [به انگلیسي] رینولد الین نیکلسن، 8 ج.، موقوفهٔ گیب، دورهٔ جدید، 4، لندن: 1925-1940. [نیز چاپ امیرکبیر، 1357].
-. **مثنوي معنوی**، به کوشش و شرح محمد استعلامي، 6 ج.، تهران: انتشارات زوار 1370 ش [نیز چاپ علمي، 1379 ش، 7 ج].
-. **مثنوی معنوی**،تصحیح قوام الدین خرمشاهی، بر اساس نسخه قونیه و مقابله با تصحیح نیکلسون و کشف الابیات، تهران،1375.
-. **مثنوی معنوی**، به اهتمام دکتر توفیق سبحانی، از روی نسخه قونیه، تهران، 1380.
-. **مثنوی معنوی**، به اهتمام دکتر عبدالکریم سروش، از روی نسخه قونیه، تهران، 1376.
-. **فیه ما فیه**، با تصحیحات و حواشی بدیع الزمان فروزانفر، تهران: 1362 ش.
-. **مکتوبات**، تصحیح توقیق سبحانی، تهران،1371.
-. **مجالس سبعه**، تهران، با تصحیح و توضیحات دکتر توفیق سبحانی، تهران، 1365ش.

نسفي، عزیزالدین، **زبدة الحقایق**، به کوشش حق وردي ناصري، تهران: کتابخانهٔ طهوري، 1364 ش؛ [نیز] ویرایش احمد مهدوي دامغاني، تهران، بنگاه ترجمه و نشر کتاب، 1344 ش/1965.
-. **مجموعه رسائل مشهور به کتاب الانسان الکامل**، بتصحیح و مقدمه فرانسوی ماریژان موله، تهران، 1362ش.
نسیمی شیروانی، عمادالدین سید علی، **دیوان**، نشر روشن، نشر روشن، 1363ش.

نظامی گنجه ای، **شرفنامه**، تصحیح دکتر بهروز ثروتیان، انتشارات امیر کبیر، تهران، 1386.
-. **خسرو وشیرین**، تصحیح و شرح مجدد از روی 14 نسخه خطی دکتر بهروز ثروتیان، تهران، 1386.
-. **لیلی و مجنون**، تصحیح و شرح دکتر بهروز ثروتیان، تهران، 1364.
-. **مخزن الاسرار**، تصحیح و شرح دکتر بهروز ثروتیان، تهران، 1363.
-. **هفت پیکر**، تصحیح و شرح دکتر بهروز ثروتیان، تهران،1377.
-. **اقبالنامه**، تصحیح و شرح دکتر بهروز ثروتیان، تهران، 1379.
-. **خمسه نظامی- با کشف الابیات**، بر اساس چاپ مسکو، هرمس، تهران، 1385.
نفیسي، سعید (ویراستار)، **سخنان منظوم ابوسعید ابي الخیر**، تهران: سنائي، بي تا.
نصرآبادي، میرزا محمد طاهر، **تذکرهٔ نصرآبادي**، به کوشش وحید دستگردي، تهران: فروغي، 1352 ش/ 1973.
نوشاهي، سید شرافت، "رقعات غنیمت کنجاهي"، **صحیفه** 63 (ژانویه 1973)، صص، 1-13.
نوربخش، جواد، **زندگي و آثار شاه نعمت الله ولي کرماني**، تهران: 1336 ش. 1359 ش.
-. **پیران طریقت**، تهران.
-. **فرهنگ نوربخش**، 10 ج.، لندن: انتشارات خانقاه نعمت اللهي، 1984-1991.
-. **معارف صوفیه**، لندن: انتشارات خانقاه نعمت اللهي، 1983-1984، 4 ج.
-. **کلیات اشعار شاه نعمت الله ولی**، تهران، 1355.

واسطي، ابوالفرج، **ترياق المحبّين في طبقات خرقة المشايخ العارفين**، قاهره: مطبعة المصر، 1887.
همداني، **عين القضاة، تمهيدات**، به كوشش عفيف عُسيران، تهران: 1341 ش/ 1962.
-. نامه هاي عين القضاة همداني، 2 ج.، به كوشش عفيف عسيران، تهران: انتشارات بنياد فرهنگ ايران، شم. 73، 1348 ش/1969.
هادي، اكبر، **شرح حال ميرداماد و ميرفندرسكي**، اصفهان: انتشارات ميثم تمّار، 1363 ش.
همام تبريزي، **ديوان همام تبريزي**، به كوشش رشيد عيوضي، تبريز: 1349 ش.
هماني، جلال الدين، **مولانا چه مي گويد**، 2 ج.، تهران: شوراي عالي فرهنگ و هنر، 1355 ش/1976.
-. **غزالي نامه**، تهران: فروغي، 1317 ش.
-. **تفسير مثنوى مولوى**-داستان دژ هوش ربا، تهران، 1373ش.

هجويري، علي بن عثمان، **كشف المحجوب**، اسلام آباد، مركز تحقيقات فارسي ايران و پاكستان، 1978؛ [نيز] ويرايش والنتين ژوكوفسكي، سن پطرزبورگ، 1899، تجديد چاپ، لنينگراد، 1926.

ياسمي، رشيد، "سعدي و عشق"، **سعدي نامه**، به كوشش حبيب يغماني، تهران: وزرات فرهنگ، 1317 ش.
يثربى، يحيى، **عرفان نظرى**، تهران، قم، 1372.
-. **فلسفه و عرفان**، قم، 1377.
-. **دين و عرفان**، تهران، 1384.
- **فلسفه امامت با دو رويكرد فلسفى و عرفانى**، تهران، 1385.

Latin Bibliography

Abun-Naser, *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World.* Middle Eastern Monographs: 7.London: OUP, 1965.

Addas, Claude, *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life od Ibn 'Arabi,* The Islamic Text Society, 1993.

Affifi, Abu al-Ala'. *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid'Din Ibnal-Arabi.* Reprinted, Lahore: 1992.

Algar, Hamid, (trans). Najm al-Din Razi, *Mirsad al-'ibad as The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return.* Delmar, New York, 1982.

Al-Jilani, Shaykh 'Abd Al-Qadir, *Sufficient provisions for seekers of the path of truth.* Translated by Muhtar Holland, Houston: Al-Baz publishing, 1995.

'Ali ibn abi Talib, Nahjul balagha: sermons, letters and sayings of Imam Ali. Qum, 1981.

Ali ibn Hussain, The Psalms of Islam (Al-Sahifat al-Kamilat al-Sajjadiyah), Translated with an introduction and annotation by William Chittick. Oxford, 1988.

Āmulī, Sayyid *Ḥ*aydar, *Asrār al-sharī'a*, tr. A. Yate as *Inner secrets of the Path*, London: Element Books for the Zahra Trust 1991.

Aminrazavi, Mehdi. "*Suhrawardi's Theory of Knowledge.*" Ph.D. Thesis, Temple Univesity, 1989.

—. "*Suhrawardi's* Metaphysics of Illumination. "*Hamdard Islamicus* XV/1 (1992).

Anawati, G.-C. and Louis Gardet. *Mystique musulmane, Aspects et tendances—Experience et techniques*. Etudes Musulmanes VIII. 4th ed. Paris: Librairie philsophique J.Vrin, 1986.

Arberry, A.J. *The Doctrine of the Sufis*. Cambridge University Press, 1977. Translation of Kalabadhi's Kitab al-ta'arruf.

—. *Muslim Saints and mystics*. London: RKP, 1966. Excerpts from the *Tadhkirat al-awliya' of 'Attar.*

—. *Mystical Poems of Rumi: first selection, poems 1-200.* Chicago: 1968.

—. *A Sufi Martyr: The Apologia of 'Ain al-Qudat al-Hamadhani.* London: Allen & Unwin, 1969.

—. *Sufism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam. London*: Allen & Unwin, 1950.

—. "The Works of Shams al-Din al-Dailami." *BSOAS* 29 (1966).

Arnaldez, R. *Reflexions chretiennes sur la mystique musulmane.* Paris: O.E.I.L., 1989.

Ashtiyani, Mirza Mihdi Mudarris. *Commentary on Sabzawari's Sharh-I Manzuma.* Edited by A. Falaturi and M. Mohaghegh. Tehran: 1973.

Asin, Palacios, *The Mystical Philosophy of Ibn Masarra and His Followers,* Leiden, Brill, 1978.

'Aṭṭar, Farid al-Din. *Le Livre de l'epreuve (Musibatnama)*. Translated into French by Isabelle de Gastines. Paris: 1981.

'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, London: Gibb Memorial Trust 1905-7.

Austin, R.J.W. "The Lady Nizam: An Image of Love and Knowledge. "*Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* VII (1988): 53-48.

—. Sufis of Andalusia, London, 1971.

Awn, Peter. Satan's *Tragedy and Redemtion: Iblis in Sufi Psychology*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983.

Baldick, J. *Mystical Islam: An Introduction to Sufism*. London: I.B. Tauris, 1989.

Behler, E. *Die Ewigkeit der Welt*. Munchen: 1965.

Bektas, Haci. *Veli Velayetnamesi*. Edited by B. Noyan. Ankara: Dogus Matbaacik, 1985.

Bell, Joseph. *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam*. Albany: SUNY Press, 1978.

Birge, John K. *The Bektashi Order of Dervishes Connecticut*: Hartford Seminary Press, 1937.

Bosworth, C.E. *The Baha al-Din al-Amili and his literary anthologies*. Journal of Semitic Studies Monograph, no. 10. Manchester: 1989.

Bouyges, Maurice. *Essai de chronologie des oeuvres de al-Ghazali*. Beirut: 1959.

Bowering, Gerhard. "*Abu Said Fazlallah b. Abi-Kayr.*" Encyclopoedia Iranica, I: 377-80.

—. "Ali b. Sehab-al-Din b. Mohammad Hamadani." *Encyclopoedia Iranic I*: 862-64.

—. *The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam*. Berlin: 1980.

—. Ed. *The Islamic Case*. New York: 1981.

—. "The Adab Literature of Classical Sufism: Ansari's Code of Conduct" *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam*. Edited by Barabara Metcalf. Berkeley: 1984.

—. "The Qur'an Commentary of al-Sulami." *Islamic Studies Presented to Charles J Adams*. Edited by W.B. Hallaq & D. Little. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991.

—. "Ibn 'Arabi's Concept of Time." *God is Beautiful and Loves Beauty*: Festschrift for *Annemarie Schimmel*, Edited by J.C. Burgel and Alma Giese. Leiden: Peter Lang, 1994.

Burckhardt,T. *Mystical AstorologyAccording to Ibn 'Arabi*, Gloucestershire, 1977.

Bylebyle, M. "The Wisdom of Illumination: A Study of the Prose Stories of Suhrawardi." Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1976.

Chittick, William C. *The Sufi path of Love: the Spiritual Teachings of Rumi*.

Albany: SUNY, 1983.
—, *Me and* Rumi,
—. *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination.* Albany: SUNY, 1989.
—. The Self-Disclosure of God, Principle of Ibn al Arabi's Cosmology, Albany, 1998.
—. Sufism: A Short Introduction, Oxford, 2001.
—. A Shi'ite Antology, Albany, 1981.
—. Faith and Practice of Islam, Albany, 1992.
Christensen, A. *Recherches sur les Ruba'iyat de 'Omar Hayyam.* Heidelberg: 1905.
Corbin, H. *Les motifs zoroastriens dans la philosophie de Sohrawardi.* Tehran: Societe d'Iranologie, 1946.
—. *Terre celeste et corps de resurrection: de l'Iran mazdeen a l'Iran shi'ite.* Paris: 1978.
—. "Le Temps Cyclique dans le Mazdeisme et dans l'Ismaelisme." *Eranos-Jahrbuch* XX (1951).
—. *Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi.* Translated by Ralph Mannheim.
Bollingen Series 99. Princeton University Press, 1969.
—. *En Islam iranien.* 4 vols. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1972.
—. And O. Yahya (eds). "*Jami' al-asrar.*" *La philosophie shi'ite.* Tehran—Paris: 1969.
—. *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis.* Edited by H. Corbin. London: 1983.
De Bruijn, J.T.P. "Sana'i and the Rise of Persian Mystical Poetry." Actes du 8me Congres de l'Union Europeenne des Arabisants et Islamisants. Aix-en-Provence: 1978.
—. *Of Piety and Poetry: the interaction of Religion and literature in the Life and Works of Hakim Sana'i of Ghazna.* Leiden: E.J. Brill 1983.
—. "The *Qalandariyyat* in Persian Mystical Poetry, From Sana'i Onwards." *The Legacy of Medieval Persian Sufism*, Edited by Leonard Lewisohn. Londo: KNP, 1992.
Deladriere, Roger., tran. Sulami: *La Lucidite Implacable (Epitre des homes du blame).* Paris: Arlea, 1991.
Dermenghem, Emile. *Vies des saints musulmans.* Algiers: 1942.
DeWeese, Devin. "The Eclipse of the Kubraviyah in central Asia." *Iranian Studies* 21 (1988): 45-83.
During, Jean. *Musique et extase, L'audition mystique dans la tradition soufie.* Paris: Albin Michel, 1988.
Efendi, M. *Sakayik Tercumesi.* Istanbul: 1853.
Ernst, Carl. *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism.* Albany: SUNY Press, 1984.
—. "The Symbolism of Birds and Flight in the Writings of Ruzbihan Baqli." *The Legacy of Mediaeval Persian Sufism.* Edited by Leonard Lewisohn.

London: KNP, 1992.
—. "Ruzbihan Baqli on Love as 'Essential Desire'." *God is Beautiful and Loves Beauty: Festschrift for Annemarie Schimmel.* Edited by J.C. Burgel and Alma Giese. Leiden: Peter Lang, 1994.
—. *Ruzbahan Baqli,* Richmond, 1996.
—. *Sufi Martyrs of Love, New York, 2002.*
Frank, R.M. *The Metaphysics of Created Being according to Abu'l-Hudhayl al'Allaf.* Istanbul: 1966.
Gairdner, W.H.T. *Al-Ghazzali's Mishkat Al-Anwar ("The Niche for Lights").* Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1952. Translation with Introduction. Reprint of the Royal Asiatic Society edition, London: 1924.
Gardet, L. "Moslem Views of Time and History." *Cultures and Time.* Paris: 1976.
—. "The Prophet." *Time and the Philosophies.* Paris: 1977.
—. *Sawanih: Inspirations from the world of Pure Spirits, The Oldest Persian Sufi Treatise on Love.*Translated by Nasrollah Pourjavady. London: KPI, 1968.
Ghazali, Abu Hamid. Ihya' 'ulum al-din. Vol. 1. BK. 1. *The Book of Knowledge* (Kitab al-"Ilm). Translated by Nabih Amin Faris. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1962.
—. *Ihya' 'ulum al-din* Vol. 1. Bk. 2. The Foundations of the Articles of Faith (Kitab al—'Qawa'id al—'aqa'id). Translated by Nabith Amin Faris. Lahore: Sh Muhammad Ashraf, 1963.
—. *Ihya' 'ulum al-din. Invocations and Supplications: Kitab al-Adhk wa'l-da'awat.* Translated by K.Nakamura. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Islami Texts Society, 1990.
—. *Ihya' 'ulum al-din. The Remembrance of Death and the Afterlife: KitabDhikr al-mawt wa ma ba'dah.* Translated by T.J. Winter. Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1989.
—. *Ihya' 'ulum al-din.* Selected passages from the *Kitab Asrar al-salah, al-Bab al-thalith fi al-shurut al-batina min a'mal al-qalb* translated by M.holland in Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship. Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1983.

—. *Ihya' 'ulum al-din. Imam Gazzali's Ihya Ulum-id-Din.* Abridged translation by Al-Haj Maulana Fazl-ul-Karim. 4 vols. Lahore. Sind Sagar Academy, 1971.
—. *Ihya' 'ulum al-din.* Vol. 1. BK. 8. Translated by Muhammad Abul Quasem. *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an: al-Ghazali's Theory (Kitab Adab tilawat al-Qur'an).* Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya press, 1979.
Gobillot, G. "Un penseur de l'Amour *(Hubb),* le mystique khurasanien al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (m. 318/930)" *Studia Islamica* lXXIII (1991).
Gramlich, Richard. "Vom islamischen Glauben an die 'gute, alte Zeit."

Istlamwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen Fritz Meier zum sechzigsten geburtstag Edited by R. Gramlich. Wiesbaden: 1974.

—. *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens Zweiter Teil: Glaube und Lehre.* Wiesbaden: 1976.

—. "Zur Ausdehnung der Zeit und Verwandtem." *Die islamische Welt zwischen Mittelater und Neuzeit.* Edited by U.Haarmann and P.Bachmann. Beirut: 1979.

—. "Der Urvertrag in der Koranauslegung (zu Sure 7, 172-3)." *Der Islam* 60 (1983).

—. *Das Sendschreiben al-Qusayris uber das Sufitum.* Wiesbaden: 1989.

—. *Schlaglichter uber das Sufitum.* Stuttgart: 1990.

—. *Die Wunder der Freunde Gottes.* Wiesbaden: 1987.

Gross, Jo-Ann. "Authority and Miraculous Behavior: reflections on Karamat Stories of Khwaja 'Ubaydullah Ahrar." *The Heritage of Sufism* Vol. II. Edited by L. Lewisohn. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1999.

Hamadani, Agha Hussain Shah. *The life and works of Sayyid Ali Hamadani (A.D. 1314-1485).*Islamabad: National Institute of Historical Cultural Research, 1984.

Helminski, Kabir, *Living Presence,* New York, 1992.

—. *The Knowing Heart; A Sufi Path of Transformation*, Boston, 2000.

Hirtenstein, S and M. Tiernan. *Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi: A Commemorative volume,* Masachusetts: Element books ltd. 1993.

Hujwiri, Ali b. Uthman. The "*Kashf al-mahjub*:" *The Oldest Persian Treatise on Sufism.* Translated by R.A. Nicholson, Reprinted London: 1976.

Ibn 'Arabi, *Fusus/ The Bezels of Widom* Trans. R.W.J. Austin, Ramsey, 1981.

—. *The Voyage of No Return*, tran by Claude Addas, The Islamic Texts Society.

—. *Contemplation of the Wholy Mysteries,* Mashahid Asras al-qudsiyya, Traslated by Cecilia Twinch and Pablo Beneito, Anqa Publication, 2001.

—. *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom,* interpreted by Tousn Bayrak, Fons Vitae, 1997.

—. *The Tree of Being,* interpreted by Tousn Bayrak, Fons Vitae, 1997.

—. *Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyya: Selected Texts.* Trans. M. Chodkiewicz, W.C. Chittick, Ch. Chodkiewicz, D. Gril, and J. Morris, Paris, 1989.

—. *Tarjuman al-ashwaq,* Ed and trans. R.A. Nicholson, London, 1978.

—. *Alanwar/Journey to the Lord of Power,* Trans. R. Harris, New York, 1981.

—. *Divine Sayings: 101 Hadith Qudsi, Recorded,* Trans. Stephen Hirtenstein and Martin Notcutt, Anqa Publication, 2004.

Iqbal, Afzal, *The Life & Works of Jalaluddin Rumi,* London,1983.

Izutsu, T. "Mysticism and the Linguistic Problem of Equivocatin in the Thought of 'Ayn al-Qudat Hamadani." *Studia Islamica* XXXI (1970).

—. *A Comparative Studi of the philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism*,I, "The Ontology of Ibn 'Arabi", Tokyo, 1966.

Junayd, al—. *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd: A Study of a Third/Ninth Century Mystic with an Edition and Translation of his Writing.* Edited and translated by Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader. Gibb Memorial Series. London: Luzac & Co., 1976.

Kraemer, Joel L. *Philosophy in the Renaissance of Islam: Abu Sulayman al-Sijistani and his Circle.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986.

Kubra, Najm al-Din, *Die Fawa'ih al-gamal wa-fawatih al-galal des Nagm ad-din al-Kubra.* Edited with a study by F. Meier. Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1957.

Landolt, Hermann. "Two Types of Mystical Thought in Muslim Iran: An Essay on Suhrawadi Shaykh al-Ishraq and 'Aynulquzat-I Hamadani." *Muslim World* 68 (1978).

Laugier de Beaurecueil, Serge de. *Ansari: Chemin de Dieu, trios traits spirituals: Les Cent Terrains* (Sad Maydan), *Les Etapes des It-inerans vers Dieu (Manazil al-sa'irin),* traduits du Persan et de l'Arabe, presentes et annotes. Paris: Sindbad, 1985.

—, ed. *Kitab 'ilal al-maqamat.* Melanges Massignon. Damacus: 1956.

—. *Khawadja 'Abdullah Ansari (396-481 H./ 1006-1089), mystique hanbalite.* Vol. XXVI of Beirut: Recherches d'Institut de letter orientales de Beyrouth, 1965.

—., trans. *Ansari: Cris du Coeur.* Paris: Sindbad, 1988.

Lewisohn, Leonard. "Shabistari's Garden of Mysteries: The Aesthetics and Hermeneutics of Sufi Poetry." *Temenos: A Review Devoted to the Arts of the Imagination.* No. 10 (1989): 177-207.

—. "The Life and Poetry of Mashriqi Tabrizi (d. 1454)." *Iranian Studies.* Vol. 22. nos. 2-3. (1989): 99-127.

—. "Muhammad Shirin Tabrizi." Sufi: *A Journal of Sufism.* Issue 1, (1988-89) 30-35.

—., ed., *The Heritage of Sufism.* Vol. II. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1999.

—., "Zindigi va dawran-I Kamal Khujandi." *Iran Nameh* (in Persian) 10/4 (1992).

Lings, Martin. "The Origins of Sufism." *Islamic Quarterly* (1956).

—. *The book of certainty*, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1992.

—. *A Sufi Saint oh the Twentieth Century*, London, 1971.

Malamud, M. "Sufism in the Twelfth-century Baghdad: The *Adab al-muridin of Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi.*" Paper presented at the 1991 MESA coference.

Massignon, ed. *Akhbar al-Hallaj, texte ancient relative a la predication et au supplice du mystique musulmanee al-Hosayn b. Mansour al-Hallaj.*

3 ed. Paris: 1957.
—. *Essai sur les origins du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane.* Etudes Musulamanes. 2 ed. Paris: Librairie Philosophique. J. Vrin, 1968.
—. *La Passion de Husay Ibn Mansur Hallaj, martyr mystique de l'Islam execute a Baghadad le 26 mars 922.* Vol. 4 of Paris: Gallimard, 1975.
—. *The passion of al-Hallaj: Mystic and Martyr of Islam.* Trans. H. Mason. Princeton University Press, 1982.
—. *Receuil des texts inedits concernant l'histoire de la mystique en pays d'Islam.* Paris: 1929.
—. "Le Temps dans la pensee islamique." *Eranos-Jahrbuch.* Zurich: 1951-2.
—. *Open Minora I.* Beirut: 1963.
Mason, Herbert. *The Death of al-Hallaj.* Notre Dame University Press 1979.
Meier, F. "Soufisme et decline Culturel." *Classicisme et decline culturel dans l'histoire de l'Islam.* Actes du Sympoisum Internationale d'Histoire de la Civilisation Musulamane. Edited by R. Brunschvig and G.E. Von Grunebaum. Paris: 1957, pp. 217-45.
—. *Abu Sa'id b. Abi'l-Hayr (357-440/967-1049): Wirklichkeit und Legende.* Leiden, Tehran, Paris: 1976.
—. *Baha'-I Walad Grundzuge seins Lebens und seines Lebens und seiner Mystik.* Acta Iranica 27, troisieme serie texts et memoires. Vol. 14. Leidon: E.J. Brill, 1989.
Milson, M.*A Sufi Rule for Novices: Kitab Adab al-muridin of Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi.* Cambridge, Mass. And London: Harvard University press, 1973.
Mole, M. "Professions de foi de deux Kubrawis: 'Ali-I Hamadani et Muhammad Nurbakhsh." *Bulletin d'etude orientales [Institute francais de Damas].* 17 (1961-62): 133-204.
—. *Les Mystiques Musulmans.* Paris: Les Deux Oceans, 1982.
—. "La version persane du Traite de dix principes de Najm al-Din Kobra par 'Ali ibn Shihab al-Din Hamadani." *Farhang-I Iran zamin.* 6 (1958): 38-66.
Morris, James W. *The Wisdom of the Throne, translation of Al—hikma al-arshiyya.* Princeton: 1981.
Mughal, Munir Ahmad, trans. *The Hundred Fields Between Man and God.* Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation, 1983.
Najm al-Din Razi, *Mirsad al-'ibad as The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return.* Trans by Algar, Hamid, Delmar, New York, 1982.
Nasr, S.H. *Islamic Philosohy from its Origin to the Present*, Albany, 2006.
—. Islamic Life and Thought, Chicago, 2001.
—. *Sufi Essays*, Chicago, 1999.
—. *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, ed by Mehdi Amin Razavi,

Surrey, 1996.
—. *Knowledge and Sacred*, New York, 1981.
—. *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, Albany, 1993.
—. *Les Etats Spirituels dans le Soufisme.* Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1973.
—. "The Relationship between Sufism and Philosophy in Persian Culture." *Hamdard Islamicus* 6.4 (1983):
—. "Why Was Farabi Called the Second Teacher." *Islamic Culture* 59 (1985).
—. *Islamic Art and Spirituality.* Suffolk, U. K: Golgonooza Press, 1987.
—. "Spiritual Chivalry." *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations II.* Edited by S.H. Naser. New York: Crossroads 1991.
—. (ed), *Islamic Spirituality*, 2 vols,New York, 1987-91.
—. *Sadr al-Din Shirazi and His Transcendent Theosophy.* Tehran: Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1978.
—. "The School of Isfahan." *A History of Muslim Philosophy.* Edited by H.M. Sharif. 2 vols. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1966.
—. *Three Muslim Sages.* New York, 1966.
—. *Ideals and Reality of Islam*, London, 1966.
—. *Encounter of Man and Nature*,London, 1968.
—. *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man*, London, 1976.
—. *Philosophy, Literature and Fine Arts, ed.*Kent, 1982.
—. *Traditional Islam in the Modern World*,London, 1987.
—. *Shi'ism:Doctrines, Thought and Spiritualit, ed.* Albany, SUNY, 1988.
—. *The Need for a sacred Science, Albany, SUNY, 1993.*
—. *A Young Muslim's Guide to the Modern World, Chicago, 1993.*
—. *The Spiritual and Religious Dimension of the Environmental Crisis*, London, 1999.
Nawawi, Al—. *An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith.* Translated E. Ibrahim and D. Johnson-Davies. 2nd ed. Beirut and Damascus: The Holy Koran Publishing House, 1976.
Nettler, Ronald L, *Sufi Metaphysics and Qur'anic Prophets, Ibn 'Arabi's Thoght and Method in the Fusus al-Hikam*, Islamic Texts Society, 2004.
Netton. "Myth, Miracle and Magic in the Rihla of Ibn Battuta." *Journal of Semitic Studies* 29:1. Spring (1984).
—. "Arabia and the Pilgrim Paradigm of Ibn Battuta: A Braudelian Approach." *Arabia and the Gulf: From Traditional Society to Modern States.* Edited by Ian Richard Netton. London: Croom Helm, 1986.
Nicholson, R.A. *Studies in Islamic Mysticism.* Reprinted, Cambridge, 1980.
—. *Rumi,: Poet and Mystic*, London, 1950.

—. A Persian Forerunner of Dante. Towyn-on-Sea, N. Wales: 1944.
—. *Selected Poems from the Diwan-I Shams-I Tabrizi*, Cambridge.
—. *Tales of Mystic Meaning*, London, 1931.
—. *The Mathnawi of Rumi*, Cambridge, 1925-1940.
—. *The Mystics of Islam*, London, 1914.
Nurbakhsh, Javad. Sufism: *Meaning, Knowledge and Unity.* New York: KNP, 1981.
—. *In the Tavern of Ruin.* New York: KNP, 1975.
—. *Spiritual Poverty in Sufism.* Translated by L. Lewisohn. London: 1984.
—. *Dogs From a Sufi Point of View.* London: KNP, 1989.
—. *Sufi Women.* Translated by L. Lewisohn. 2nd ed. London: KNP, 1990.
—. "Two Approaches to the Principle of the Unity of Being." *The Heritage of Sufism.* Vol. II. Edited by L. Lewisohn. Oxford, One-world Publications, 1999.
Nwyia, Paul. "Le Tafsir Mystique attribute a Ga'far Sadiq: Edition critique," *Melanges de l'Universite Saint-Joseph*, XLIII/4 (1968).
—. *Exegese coranique et langage mystique, Nouvel essai sur le lexique technique des mystiques musulmanes.* Recherches publiees sous la direction de l'Institut de Lettres Orientales de Beyrouth, Serie I: Pensee arabe et musulamane, vol. XLIX. Beirut: Dar el-Mchreq Editeurs 1970.
—., ed. *Trois oeuvres inedites de mystiques musulmans: Shaqiq al-Balkhi, Ibn 'Ata, Niffari.*Recherches, Collection publiees sous la direction de la Faculte des letters et des Sciences Humaines de l'Universite Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth, Serie I: Pensee arabe et musulmane, vol. 7. 2nd ed. Beirut: Dar el-Machreq Editeurs SARL 1982.
Pines, S. *Beitrage zur islamischen Atomenlehre.* Grafenhainichen: 1936.
—. *Nouvelles etudes sur Awhad al-zaman Abu-l-Barakat al-Baghdadi.* Paris: 1955.
—. And S. Sambursky. *The Concept of Time in Late Neoplatonism.* Jersalem: 1971.
Pourjavadi, N. :Selfhood and in the Sufism of Ahmad Ghazzali." Sophia Perennis IV(1981).
—. Trans., ed. Ahmad Ghazali, Sawanh; *Inspirations from the World of Pure Spirits.* London, KPI, 1986.
Quasem, Muhammad Abul. *The Recitation and Interpretation of the Qur'an: al-Ghazzali's Theory,* Kuala Lumpur, 1979.
Qushayri, 'Abu'l-Qasim al—. *The Principles of Sufism by al—Qushayi.* Translated by B.R. Von Schlegell. Berkely: Mizan Press, 1990.
Rafiqi, Abdul Qaiyum. *Sufism in Kashmir from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century.* Varanasi: Bharatiya Publishing House, 1972.

Rahman, F. "The Eternity of the World and the Heavenly Bodies in Post-Avicennan Philosophy." *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science.* Edited b G. F. Hourani. Albany: 1975.
—. "The God-World Relationship in Mulla Sadra." *Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science.* Edited by G.F. Hourani. Albany: 1975.
—. *The Philosophy of Mulla Sadra.* Albany: 1975.
Ravan Farhadi, *Abdullah Ansari of Herat*, Richmond,1995.
Razi. Najm-al-Din, *The Path of God's Bondsmen.* Translation of *Mirsad al-'ibad* by Hamid Algar.New York: Caravan Books 1982.
Reinert, B. Die *Lehre tawakhul in der klassischen Sufik.* Berlin: 1968.
Rizvi, S.A.A.*A History of Sufism in India.* 2 vols. New Delhi: Mundshiram Manoharlal, 1978-83.
Rūmī, *Mathnavī-yi Ma'navī*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, London, Giib Memorial Trsut 1925-40.
—. Discourses of Rumi (Fihi ma Fihi), tranaslated by A. Arberry, London.
Sabzewari Khurasani, Shakh Muhammad 'Ali Mu'adhdhin, *Tuhfaya—'Abasi, Tranlated by Faghfoory, Mohammad H,* Lanham, 2008.
Safavi, Seyed G, *The Structure of Rumi's Mathnawi*, London, 2006.
—*Rumi's Thought*, Tehran, 2003.
—. *Rumi Teachings*, Xlibris, USA, 2008.
—. *Sufism*, Xlibris, USA, 2008.
—. "The practice of Mysticism in Islam", *Transcendent Philosophy Journal,* June 2001, London.
—. "Rumi's Spiritual Shiism", *Transcendent Philosophy Journal,* December 2006.
—. "Rumi and Mulla Sadra on Theoretical and Practical Reason", *Transcendent Philosophy Journal,*London, December 2007.
—. "The Structure and Hermeneutics of The Third Book of Rumi's Mathnawi as a Whole", *Transcendent Philosophy Journal,* London, December 2008.
—. "The Structure and Hermeneutics of The Sixth Book of Rumi's Mathnawi as a Whole", *Alhikmah,* London, 2009.
—. Ed. *Transcendent Philosophy Journal*, London Academy of Iranian Studies, London, 2000-2008.
Sakkakini, Widad et—. *First Among Sufis, The Life and Thought of Rabia al-Adawiyya, the Woman Saint of Basra.* Translated by Nabil Safwat. London: Octagon Press, 1982.
Safeh, L. & Morris, R. Munajat: *The Intimate Prayers of Khwajih 'Abd Allah Ansari.* New York: Khaneghah Maleknia Naseralishah, 1975.
Sarrāj,Abu Nasr, *Kitāb al-luma'*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, Leiden: Gibb Memorial Trust 1914.
Schimmel, A. "The Ornament of the Saints." *Iranian Studies* 7 (1974).

—. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina. 1975.
—. *And Muhammad is His Messenger.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1985.
—. *I am Wind, You are Fire: The Life and Work of Rumi.* Boston & London: 1992.
—. *The Triumphal Sun: a Study of the Works of Jalaloddin Rumi.* London, 1978.
Schuon, Frithjof, *Sufism: Veil and Quintessence,* Idiana, 2007.
—. *Gnosis: Divine Wisdom,* Indiana, 2006.
—. *The Eye of the Heart,* Indiana, 1997.
—. *The Transcendent Unity of Religions,* 1984.
Shaqiq al-Balkhi. "Adab al-'ibadat." *Trois oeuvres inedites de mystiques musulmans: Saqiq al-Balkhi, Ibn 'Ata, Niffari.* Edited by Paul Nwyia. Recherches, Collection publiee sous la direction de la Faculte des letters et des Sciences Humaines de l'Universite Saint-joseph, Beyrouth, Serie I: Pensee arabe et musulmane, vol. 7. 2nd ed. Beirut, Dar el-Machreq Editeurs SARL 1982.
Singh, Sir Jogendra. *The Invocations of Shaikh Abdullah Ansari.* London: John Murray, 1939.
Smith, Margaret. *Rabi'ah the Mystic and Her Fellow—Saints in Islam.* Cambridge: University press, 1928.
—. *An Early Mystic of Baghdad: a Study of the Life and Teachings of Harith b. Asad al-Muhasibi. 781-857 A.D.* London: Sheldon Press, 1977
Stewart, Devin J. "A Biographical Notice on Baha' al-Din al-'Amili (d. 1030/1621)." *Journal of the American Oriental Society.* CX/iii. July-Sept. 1991.
Suhrawardi (Shaykh al-Ishraq). *Opera Metaphysica et Mystica.* Edited by henry Corbin. 3 vols. Tehran and Paris 1952-70.
Suhrawardi, Abu Najib. *A Sufi Rule for Novices: Kitab Adab al-muridin of Abu al-Najib al-Suhrawardi.* Abridged trans. And introduction by Menahem Milson. Cambridge, Mass., and London: Harvard University Press: 1975.

Sulami, 'Abd al-Rahman. Sulami: *La Lucidite Implacable (Epitre des homes du blame).* Translated into French by Roger Deladriere. Paris: Arlea 1991.
—. R. Hartmann. "*Al-Sulami's Risalat al-Malamatiyya.*" Der Islam. VIII (1917-18).
—. *The Way of Sufi Chivalry.* Translated by Tosun Bayrak—al-Jerrahi. Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1991. Translation of Sulami's *Risala al-futuwwa.*
Sviri, Sara. "The Mystical Psychology of al-Hakim al-Tirmidihi." Ph.D Thesis. Tel-Aviv, 1978.
Taeschner, F. *Gulschehri's Mesnevi auf Achi Evran, den Heiligen von*

Kirschehir und Paton der turkischen Zunfte. Wiesbaden: Deutsche Morgenlandische Gesellschaft, Kommissionverlag Franz Steiner 1955.

—. "Der Anteil des Sufismus an der Formung des Futuwwideals." *Der Islam* 24 (1937): 43-74.

Tahanawi, Muhammad 'Ali ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad Hamid al-*Kashshaf Istilahat al-funun.* Edited by A. Sprenger. Calcutta: 1278/1861.

Takeshita, Masataka. "Continuity and Change in the Tradition of Shiraz Love Mystcism: A Comparison between Daylami's *'Atf al-Alif* and Ruzbihan Baqli's *'Abhar al-'ashiqin.*" Orient XXIII (1987): 113-31.

Taskoprizade, A. *al-Shaqa'iq al-Numaniyya fi 'ulama' al-dawlat al-'uthmaniyya.* Beirut: Dar al-kitab al-'Arabi, 1970.

Tavard, G. *Poetry and Contemplation in St. John of the Cross.* Ohio University Press, 1988.

Tehrani, K. "Mystical Symbolism in Four Treatises of Suhrawardi." Ph.D. Thesis Columbia University, 1974.

Teufel, J.K. *Eine Lebenbeschreibung des Scheichs Ali-i Hamadani (gestorben 1385): Die Xulasat ul-manaqib des Maulana Nur ud-Din Ca'far-I Badaxsi.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1962.

Thackston, Wheeler M. *Kwaja Abdullah Ansari: Intimate Conversations:* New York: Paulist Press, 1978.

Turkman, Erkan, *The Essence of Rumi's Masnevi including his life and works,* Konya, 1992.

Trimingham, J.S. *The Sufi orders in Islam.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

Upton, Charles. *Dookeeper of the Heart, Versions of Rabi'a.* Putney, VT: Threshold Books, 1988.

Waley, M.I. "Aziz al-Din Nasafi on Spiritual Retreat *(Khalwa).*" *Sufi: A Journal of Sufism* 17. Spring (1993).

Watt, Montgomery. *Muslim Intellectual: A Study of al-Ghazali.* Edinburgh: 1963.

—. *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam.* London: 1948.

Webb, Gisella. "Suhrawardi's Angelology." Ph. D. Thesis, Temple University, 1989.

Weil, G. *Maimonides uber die Lebensdauer.* Basel: 1953.

Weil, Simone. *Gravity and Grace.* Translated by E. Craufurd. London: ARK, 1987.

Welhausen, J. *Reste arabischen Heidentums.* Berlin: 1897.

Wensinck, A. J. "On the Relation Between Ghazali's Cosmology and His Mysticism."

Mededeelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen. Afdeeling Letterkunde, Deel 75, Serie A, no. 6 (1933): 183-209.

—. *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane.* 8 vols. Leiden: 1936-88.
Wickens, G.M. *Morals Pointed and Tales Adorned: The Bustan of Sa'di.* Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974.
Ziai, H. "Suhrawardi's Philosophy of Illumination." Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, 1976.

Endnotes

1 We use this Latin term to distinguish it from "sacred science" which possesses a more general meaning and includes also traditional cosmological sciences.

2 As far as opposition to Ibn 'Arabī's doctrines are concerned, see for example, Alexander Knysh, *Ibn 'Arabī in the Later Islamic Tradition—The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).

3 On the traditional understanding of the perennial philosophy see Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 1989), pp. 68ff. See also Frithjof Schuon, "Tracing the Notion of Philosophy," in his *Sufism—Veil and Quintessence*, trans. William Stoddart (Bloomingto (IN): World Wisdom Books, 1981), Chap. 5, pp. 115-128.

4 The relation between Shi'ite gnosis and Sufism is a fascinating and at the same time crucially important subject with which we cannot deal here. A number of Western scholars, chief among them Henry Corbin, have treated this issue metaphysically and historically. See for example his *En Islam iranien*, Vol. III, *Les Fidèles d'amour—Shi'ism et soufisme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), especially pp. 149ff. See also Mohammad Ali Amir Mo'ezzi and David Streight, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. 1994); and S. H. Nasr, *Sufi Essays* (Chicago: ABC International Group, 1999), pp. 104-120.

5 Unfortunately there is no complete or even nearly complete history of either Sufism itself nor doctrinal Sufism. Even the details of the School of Ibn 'Arabī are far from being known. At the present stage of scholarship we know but a few major peaks of this majestic range and much remains to be discussed and brought to light in the arena of international scholarship.

6 As an example of the relation between Ibn 'Arabī and earlier gnostics one can compare his treatment of *walāyah/wilāyah* discussed by many scholars such as Michel Chodkiewicz and William Chittick (see for example works cited below) and the writings of H(akīm Tirmidhī. For the views of the latter

see Tirmidhī, *Kitāb khatm al-awliyā'*, ed. Osman Yahya (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1965); also Bernd Radtke, *Drei Schriften des Theosophen Tirmid* (Beirut: In Kommissein bei Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart, 1992).

There is now a substantial body of works in European languages on Ibn 'Arabī as well as translations of many of his writings especially in French. On Ibn 'Arabī's life and works see Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn 'Arabī*, trans. Peter Kingsley (Cambridge (UK): Islamic Texts Society, 1993); and Stephen Hirtenstein, *The Unlimited Mercifier: The Spiritual Life and Thought of Ibn 'Arabī* (Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 1999). For an introduction to his teachings see William Chittick, *Ibn 'Arabī: Heir to the Prophets* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005). For his works see Osman Yahya, *Histoire et classification de l'oeuvre d'Ibn 'Arabī* (Damascus: Institut Français de Damas, 1964). For Ibn 'Arabī's gnostic teachings see W. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1989); his *The Self-Disclosure of God* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998; Michel Chodkiewicz, *An Ocean without Shore: Ibn 'Arabī, the Book and the Law*, trans. David Streight, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993); *idem. Seal of the Saints—Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī*, trans. Liadain Sherrard (Cambridge, UK: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993); Henry Corbin, *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabī* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); and Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), Part I, pp. 7-283.

7 See *The Wisdom of the Prophets* of Ibn 'Arabī, trans. from the Arabic to French with notes by Titus Burchkhardt, trans. from French to English by Angela Culme-Seymour (Aldsworth (UK): Beshara Publications, 1975). This work has penetrating comments on the metaphysics of Ibn 'Arabī by Burckhardt. The latest and the most successful translation of the *Fuṣūṣ* in English is by Caner Dagli, *The Ringstones of Wisdom* (*Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*) (Chicago: Kazi Publications, Great Books of the Islamic World, 2004). See also Charles-André Gilis, *Le Livre des chatons des sagesse* (Beirut: Al-Bouraq Éditions, 1997).

8 See Ibn 'Arabī, *Les Illuminations de la Mecque—The Meccan Illuminations*, trans. under the direction of Michel Chodkiewicz (Paris: Sindbad, 1988).

9 On the history of the School of Ibn 'Arabī and theoretical gnosis see W. Chittick, "The School of Ibn 'Arabī," in Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 510-523; S. H. Nasr, "Seventh Century Sufism and the School of Ibn 'Arabī," in his *Sufi Essays* (Chicago: ABC International Group, 1999), pp. 97-103; and Annemarie Schimmel, "Theosophical Sufism" in her *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1978), pp. 259-286. There are also important references to this School in several introductions of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī to various philosophical and

Sufi works edited by himself such as his edition of *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* of Qayṣarī (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishārāt-i 'Ilmī wa Farhangī, 1375 [A.H. solar]). See also A. Knysh, *op. cit.*

10 See W. Chittick, *Faith and Practice of Islam* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992); Chittick, "The Five Divine Presences: From al-Qūnawī to al- Qays}arī," *Muslim World*, vol. 72, 1982, pp. 107-128; and Chittick, "The Last Will and Testament of Ibn 'Arabī's Foremost Disciple and Some Notes on its Author," *Sophia perennis*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1978, pp. 43-58. See also Muḥammad Khwājawī, *Daw Ṣadr al-Dīn* (Tehran, Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1378 [A.H. solar]), pp. 17-114, containing one of the best summaries of the life, works and thought of Qūnawī.

11 See *Kitāb al-fukūk*, ed. by M. Khwājawī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1371 [A.H. solar]).

12 See the edition of M. Khwājawī (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1374 [A.H. solar]). This large volume includes, besides the texts of Qūnawī and Fanārī, glosses by later members of the School of theoretical gnosis in Persia from Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā Qumsha'ī, Mīrzā Hāshim Ashkiwarī, and Sayyid Muh}ammad Qummī to Ayatollah Rūh} Allāh Khumaynī (Khomeini) and Ḥasanzādah Āmulī. There are also numerous commentaries on this text by Turkish authors.

13 This work was studied and translated by Arthur J. Arberry along with othe poems of Ibn al-Fārid} in *The Mystical Poems of Ibn al- Fāriḍ* (London: I Walker, 1952 and Dublin: E. Walker, 1956). See also Emil Homerin, *The Win. of Love and Life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

14 See S. J. Āshtiyānī's edition with commentary and introduction upon *Mashāriq al-darārī* (Mashhad: Chāpkhāna-yi Dānishgāh-i Firdawsī, 1398 [A.H. solar]).

15 See his *Sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (Qom: Būstān-i kitāb, 2002).

16 See Kashānī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1966); also his *Majmū'at al-rasā'il wa'l-muṣannafāt*, ed. Majīd Hādī-zādah (Tehran: Mīrāth-i maktūb, 2000); and his *Traité sur la prédestination et le libre arbitre*, trans. Omar Guyard (Beirut: Al-Bouraq, 2005).

17 On Maghribī Sufism see Vincent Cornell, *The Realm of the Saint—Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1998).

18 When Titus Burckhardt was in Morocco in the 1930's, he experienced directly the presence of these teachings. We shall turn to this matter later in this essay.

19 See Michel Chodkiewicz, *Spiritual Writings of Amir 'Abd al-Kader*, trans. by team under James Chrestensen and Tom Manning (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995); and *Le Livre des haltes*, edited and trans. by Michel Lagande (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

20 See Michael Winter, *Society and Religion in Early Ottoman Egypt: Studies in the Writings of 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rānī* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1982).

21 See A. Knysh, *op.cit.*, pp. 225ff.

22 See al-Jīlī, *Universal Man*, extracts translated with commentary by Titus Burckhardt, English. English translation from the French by Angela Culme-Seymour (Sherborne, Glos.: Beshara Press, 1983); and Reynold A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press, 1978), Chapter II, pp. 77ff.

23 See Nābulusī, *Sharḥ dīwān ibn al-Fāriḍ* (Beirut: Dār al-Turāth, 196?); and Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī, 1641-1731* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005).

24 See Leslie Cadavid (ed. and trans.), *Two Who Attained* (Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae, in press).

25 In light of our discussion of the significance of theoretical gnosis it is important to note that this master of *'irfān* was the first rector of a university, to use a contemporary term, in the Ottoman Empire. On Qayṣarī see the introduction of S. J. Āshtiyānī to *Rasā'il-i Qayṣarī* (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1357 [A.H. solar]); Mehmet Bayraktar (ed.), *Dāwūd Qayṣarī—Rasā'il* (Kayseri: Metroplitan Municipality, 1997); and also Emil Homerin, *op. cit.*

Many glosses have been written to this day on Qayṣarī's commentary including that of Ayatollah Khomeini. See Āyat Allāh al-'uẓmā al-Imām al-Khumaynī, *Ta'līqāt 'alā sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam wa miṣbāḥ al-uns* (Qom: Daftar-i tablīghāt-i islāmī. 1410 [A.H. lunar]). There were also numerous Ottoman glosses and commentaries on Qayṣarī.

26 See his *Commentary upon the Introduction of Qayṣarī to the Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam of Ibn Arabī*, with introductions in French and English by Henry Corbin and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (Mashhad: Meshed University Press, 1966).

27 See ft. nt. 12.

28 See Ibrahim Kalin's entries to these figures in Oliver Leaman (ed.), *Dictionary of Islamic Philosophy* (forthcoming).

29 See W. Chittick, "The School of Ibn 'Arabī," in S. H. Nasr and Oliver Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 520.
On the history of this School in India in general see W. Chittick, "Notes on Ibn 'Arabī's Influence in the Subcontinent," in *The Muslim World*, vol. LXXXII, no. 3-4, July-October, 1992, pp. 218-241; and Sayyid 'Alī 'Abbās Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India* (2 vols.) (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1978), *in passim*.

30 Chittick discusses many of these figures in his "Notes on Ibn 'Arabī's Influence . . ."

31 See Chittick, "Notes on Ibn 'Arabī's Influence . . . , " pp. 233ff.

32 See for example, Shah Waliullah of Delhi, *Sufism and the Islamic Tradition*, trans. G. N. Jalbani, ed. D. B. Fry (London: Octagon Press, 1980). This work contains the translation of both the *Lamaḥāt*, one of Shāh Walī Allāh's main

philosophical texts, and the *Sata'āt*. Both texts, and especially the first, reveal the influence of theoretical gnosis on this major intellectual figure.

On Thanvi see Fuad Nadeem, "A Traditional Islamic Response to the Rise of Modernism," in Joseph Lumbard (ed.), *Islam Fundamentalism, and the Betrayal of Tradition (Bloomington,* IN: World Wisdom Books, 2004), pp. 79-116.

33 See Syed Muhaammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Mysticism of Ḥamzah Fanṣūrī* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1970).

34 See Zailan Moris, "South-east Asia," in Nasr and Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 1134ff.

35 Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-Yü's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), pp. 32ff. See also Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: A Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

36 See Balyānī, *Épître sur l'Unicité absolue*, trans. Michel Chodkiewicz (Paris: Les Deux Océans, 1982).

37 See Henry Corbin and Osman Yahya, *La Philosophie shi'ite* (Paris-Tehran: Andrien-Maisonneuve and Departement d'Iranologie, 1969); and (same authors) *Le Texte des textes* (Paris-Tehran: Andrien-Maisonneuve and Departement d'Iranologie, 1975). This work contains Āmulī's commentar on the *Fuṣūṣ*. See also Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, Vol. III, pp. 149ff.

38 Edited by Rajab 'Alī Maẓlūmī (Tehran: McGill University and Tehra University Press, 1980).

39 This long work has been studied and edited by Māyil Hirawī as *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Mawlā, 1368 [A.H. solar]).

40 Edited by Muḥsin Bīdādfar (Qom: Intishārāt-i Bīdār, 1378 [A. H. solar]).

41 Edited with introduction and commentary by S. J. Āshtiyānī (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1976). On Ibn Turkah see H. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. III, pp. 233ff.; and S. H. Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy—From Its Origin to Today—Philosophy in the Land of Prophecy* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, forthcoming), Chapter 10.

42 See Āmulī, *Taḥrīr tamhīd al-qawā'id* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i al-Zahrā', 1372 [A.H. solar]). This voluminous text is one of the major works on theoretical gnosis to appear in recent times.

43 Edited by W. Chittick (Tehran: The Imperial Academy of Philosophy, 1977). This edition contains a major introduction by Āshtiyānī dealing with some of the most delicate issues of *'irfān*.

44 We were privileged to study the *Ashi''at al-lama'āt* over a several year period with Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim Aṣṣār who expounded the major themes of gnosis through this beautifully written text.

45 On Shi'ism in Safavid Persia see, S. H. Nasr, *Traditional Islam in the Modern World* (London: KPI, 1987), Chapter 4, pp. 59-72.

46 See S. H. Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī and his Transcendent Theosophy* (Tehran: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 1997), Chapter 4, pp. 69-82.

47 See Yahya Christian Bonaud, *L'Imam Khomeyni, un gnostique méconnu du XX^e siècle* (Beirut: Les Éditions Al-Bouraq, 1997), pp. 80-81. Bonaud mentions in this connection a number of names such as Mullā Ḥasan Lunbānī (d. 1094/1683) and Muḥammad 'Alī Muẓaffar (d. 1198/1783-84) as does S. J. Āshtiyānī, but the history of *'irfān-i naẓarī* from the Safavid period to Sayyid Raḍī is far from clear. As far as *'irfān* is concerned, Sayyid Raḍī possibly studied with Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Ābāda'ī.

48 On him see Manūchihr Ṣadūq Suhā, *Tārīkh-i ḥukamā' wa 'urafā-yi muta'akhkhir* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i ḥikmat, 1381 [A.H. solar]), pp. 261-262.

49 On Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā see Ṣadūqī Suhā, *op.cit.*, p. 259ff. On him and other major figures of the School of Tehran see also Nasr, *Islamic Philosophy from its Origin to Today*, Chapter 13. See also the introductions of S. J. Āshtiyānī to *Sharḥ al-mashā'ir* of Lāhījī (Mashhad: Mashhad University Press, 1964); and to Mullā Ṣadrā's *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah* (Mashhad: Mashhad University Press, 1967), concerning Āqā Muḥammad Riḍā and the whole history of *'irfān* in Persia from the end of the Safavid period onward.

50 See Ṣadūqī Suhā, *op.cit.*, p. 267.

51 These figures are discussed by Suhā. See also our *Islamic Philosophy* . . . For Shahābādī see Bonaud, *op.cit.*, pp. 82-87.

52 Bonaud, *op.cit.*, p. 87.

53 The major study of Bonaud, cited above, is an exception. Nothing comparable exists in English.

54 One day in the 1960's when we were discussing the philosophical ideas of Ayatollah Khomeini with our eminent teacher, 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī, who was his friend, we asked the 'Allāmah what philosophical schools most attracted Ayatollah Khomeini. He answered that Ayatollah Khomeini had little patience (*ḥawṣilah*) for the logical arguments of Peripatetic philosophy but was more interested in Mullā Ṣadrā and Ibn 'Arabī. The same view is confirmed by Mīrzā Mahdī Ḥā'irī who studied with Ayatollah Khomeini and who says,

> He [Imam Khomeini] did not have much interest in Peripatetic philosophy and logic. His teaching of the *Asfār* had more of a gnostic attraction. He had studied *'irfān* well with Āqā-yi Shāhābādī and was busy all the time reading the books of Ibn 'Arabī. Therefore, he also looked at the *Asfār* from the point of view of Ibn 'Arabī and not from the perspective of Ibn Sīnā and Fārābī. When he came to the words of Ibn Sīnā and Fārābī, he would become completely uncomfortable and would escape from philosophical constraints through the rich power of *'irfān*. *Khirad-nāma-yi hamshahrī*, June 1, 2005, p. 17

55 On the different gnostic currents in Shi'ism see our foreword to Ḥusaynī Ṭihrānī, *Kernel of the Kernel* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2003), pp. xiii-xix.

56 On the gnostic works of Ayatollah Khomeini see Bonaud, *op.cit.*, Chapter 2, pp. 103ff. The institution called Mu'assisa-yi tanẓīm wa nashr-i āthār-i al-Imām al-Khumaynī in Tehran has published all of his works including those concerned with gnosis as well as the *dīwān* of his poetry.

57 This is not only true of Persia but also of Shi'ite circles in Iraq such as the one in Najaf, at least until a few years ago. During the Qajar and early Pahlavi periods, Tehran was better known for *'irfān-i naẓarī* and Najaf for operative *'irfān*, although texts such as the *Fuṣūṣ* were also taught in Najaf by remarkable masters with whom such luminaries as 'Allāmah Ṭabāṭabā'ī studied this seminal text.

58 Tehran, Sāzimān-i chāp wa intishārāt-i Wizārāt-i Farhang wa Irshād-i islāmī, 1378 [A.H. solar].

59 To quote the original French, "*La substance de la connaissance est la Connaissance de la Substance.*" F. Schuon, *Formes et substance dans les religions* (Paris: Dervy-Livres, 1975, p. 35).

60 We have dealt with this issue extensively in our *Knowledge and the Sacred*; see also F. Schuon, *Stations of Wisdom* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Books, 1995), pp. 1-42.

61 We have dealt with the teachings of this Supreme Science in our *Knowledge and the Sacred*, Chapter 4, pp. 130ff. This Supreme Science is of course also metaphysics as traditionally understood. See René Guénon, "Oriental Metaphysics," in Jacob Needleman (ed.), *The Sword of Gnosis* (Boston: Arkana, 1986), pp. 40-56. Schuon has also written many illuminating pages on the subject including his book *Survey of Metaphysics and Esoterism*, trans. Gustavo Polit (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Books, 1986). See also S. H. Nasr (ed.), *The Essential Frithjof Schuon* (Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom Books, 2005), especially pp. 309ff.

62 See for example, Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1973), Chapter X, pp. 176ff; and Henry Corbin, *Temple and Contemplation*, trans. Philip and Liadain Sherrard (London: KPI, 1986), pp. 183ff.

63 Metaphysically speaking, creation must take place in God before the external act of creation takes place. On this important doctrine across many religious boundaries see Leo Schaya, *La Création en Dieu* (Paris, Dervy-Livres, 1983).

64 See W. Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al-'Arabī's Cosmology* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1998).

65 See Toshihiko Tzutsu, *Creation and the Timeless Order of Things* (Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 1984).

66 For outstanding examples of this function of metaphysics and gnosis see René Guénon, *Fundamental Symbols: The Universal Language of Sacred Science*, trans. Alvin Moore, ed. Martin Lings (Cambridge, UK: Quinta Essentia, 1995);

and Martin Lings, *Symbol and Archetype: A Study of the Meaning of Existence* (Cambridge (UK): Quinta Essentia, 1991).

67 We have dealt with this issue extensively in our *Knowledge and the Sacred.*

68 See our *In the Garden of Truth* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, forthcoming).

69 1-Maḥmūd Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, ed. Ṣ. Muvaḥḥid, Tehran: Ṭahūrī 1368 Shamsī, first stanza. On this theme in his thought, see L. Lewisohn, *Beyond faith and infidelity: The Sufi poetry and teachings of Mahmud Shabistari*, Richmond: Curzon Press 1995, pp. 217ff.

70 Al-Qur'ān, al-mu'minūn (The Believers) 23: 115.

71 Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, Cairo: Būlāq 1911, vol. II, pp. 231-32, 310; Muḥammad al-Khwārizmī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. S.J. Āshtiyānī, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ḥikmat 1364 Shamsī, pp. 285, 242; *Qāḍī* Sa'īd al-Qummī, *Sharḥ Tawḥīd al-Ṣadūq*, ed. N. Ḥabībī, Tehran: vol. I, pp. 40; 54, 101, 507, 686, 703; Javādī Āmulī, *Taḥrīr Tamhīd al-qawā'id-i Ṣā'in al-Dīn 'Alī Ibn Muḥammad al-Turka*, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Zahrā' 1372 Shamsī, p. 510. Cf. A. Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions of Islam*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1975, pp. 139, 189, 268, 291, 382; W. Chittick, *The Sufi path of knowledge: Ibn 'Arabī's metaphysics of imagination*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1989, pp. 66, 126, 180, 204, 250.

72 Al-Qur'ān, al-Dhāriyāt (The scattering winds) 51: 56.

73 Al-Qur'ān, al-Ḥashr (The resurrection) 59: 19.

74 Al-Qur'ān, al-Ḥijr (The Rock) 15: 26.

75 Al-Qur'ān, al-Tīn (The Fig) 95:

76 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 151.

77 Qur'ān, al-Aḥzāb (The Confederates) 33: 77.

78 Al-Qur'ān, al-Isrā' (The Night Journey) 17: 70.

79 Al-Qur'ān, al-Baqara (The Cow) 2: 31 and al-'Alaq (The Clot) 96: 6.

80 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 329.

81 *Āmidī, Ghurar al-ḥikam wa durar al-kalim*, ed. J. Urmawī, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1366 Shamsī, vol. V, p. 108, *ḥadīth* # 7569; Maytham al-Baḥrānī, *Sharḥ mi'at kalima*, ed. J. Urmawī,Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī li l-maṭbū'āt 1996, pp. 52ff; Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Tafsīr al-Muḥīṭ al-A'ẓam wa l-baḥr al-khiḍam*, ed. S.M. Musawī Tabrīzī, Tehran: Vizārat-i farhang va irshād-i Islāmī 1374 Shamsī, vol. I, p. 249;

82 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 411.

83 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 395, referring to the *ḥadīth* **My heavens and My earth embrace Me not, but the heart of My believing servant does embrace Me.**

See Ghazālī, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Cairo: Būlāq 1908-09, vol. III, pp. 1, 12; Ibn 'Arabī, al-Futūḥāt, vol. I, p. 216 and vol. III, p. 250 *inter alia*; 'Allāma Majlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār*, 3rd edition, Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-turāth al-'arabī 1983, vol. LV, p. 39; Qummī, *Sharḥ Tawḥīd*, vol. I, p. 414. Cf. Chittick, *The*

Sufi path of knowledge, pp. 107, 276, 339-40, 348, 379; Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, p. 190.

84 Ibn 'Arabī, *Rasā'il*, ed, N.M. Hiravī, Tehran 1369 Shamsī, p. 70; eadem, *Futūḥāt*, vol. II, p. 262; Qummī, *Sharḥ Tawḥīd*, vol. I, p. 491; Majlisī, *Biḥār*, vol. LV, p. 44, *ḥadīth* # 9-13. Cf. Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, p. 96; Chittick, *The Sufi path of knowledge*, pp. 217, 328, 364; al-Ghazali, *The niche of lights*, tr. W.H.T. Gairdner, New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan 1991, p. 44.

85 Ibn 'Arabī, *Rasā'il*, p. 29; eadem, *Futūḥāt*, vol. II, p. 553; Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, ed. 'A. Ghaffārī, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1957-60, vol. II, p. 352; Majlisī, *Biḥār*, vol. LXVII, p. 22; Qummī, *Sharḥ Tawḥīd*, vol. I, 29-30, 702. Cf. Chittick, *The Sufi path of knowledge*, pp. 176, 326-29; Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, pp. 43, 133, 144, 277.

86 Qummī, *Sharḥ Tawḥīd*, vol. I, pp. 736-37; cf. Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, p. 136.

87 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplets 397-99, 402, 409, 410.

88 Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, pp. 98-108.

89 Lewisohn, *Faith and infidelity*, pp. 274-77, 304ff.

90 See the classic work of Shi'i Sufism on this topic, *Asrār al-sharī'a* of Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. after 1385), tr. A. Yate as *Inner secrets of the Path*, London: Element Books for the Zahra Trust 1991.

91 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 455.

92 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 575-580.

93 'Abdul Ḥusayn Zarrīnkūb, *The value of the Sufi heritage*, Tehran 1362 Sham p. 101.

94 Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, *'Ulūm-i Islāmī*, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ṣadrā 1366 Shamsī, vol. II, pp. 94-95.

95 Cf. the *ḥadīth* in Mīrzā Ḥusayn Nūrī, *Mustadrak al-wasā'il*, Qum: Ismā'īliyān n.d., vol. XI, p. 173; Āmulī, *Tafsīr*, vol. I, p. 195 and pp. 227-28 for discussion; Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, p. 99. 34.

96 'Azīz-i Nasafī, *Kitāb al-Insān al-Kāmil*, ed. M. Molé, Tehran: Ṭahūrī 1362 Shamsī, p. 3.

97 Rūmī, *Mathnavī-yi Ma'navī*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, London: Giib Memorial Trsut 1925-40, preface to Book Five.

98 On these concepts, see Martin Lings, *The book of certainty*, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society 1992, pp. 1-11.

99 Al-Qur'ān, al-An'ām (The Cattle) 6: 162.

100 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wa l-tanbīhāt with commentaries*, ed. M. Shihābī, Qum: Nashr al-balāgha 1375 Shamsī, vol. III, p. 369.

101 'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, London: Gibb Memorial Trust 1905-7, vol. II, p.

102 'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat al-awliyā'*, vol. II, p. 34.

103 Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, *'Ulūm-i Islāmī*, vol. II, pp. 87, 90-91.

104 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplet 121; Muḥammad Lāhījī, *Mafātīḥ al-I'jāz*, eds. M.R. Khāliqī & 'I. Karbāsī, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Zavvār 1371 Shamsī, pp. 66-72. Cf. Lewisohn, *Faith and infidelity*, pp. 228-37.

105 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ishārāt wa l-tanbīhāt*, vol. III, p. 375.

106 Nasafī, *Insān-i Kāmil*, pp. 12-3, 84.

107 Nasafī, *Zubdat al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. Ḥaqq-vardī Nāṣirī, Tehran: Ṭahūrī 1985, p. 111.

108 Sayyed Mahdī Baḥr al-'ulūm, *Sayr va sulūk*, ed. S.M. Ḥusaynī Ṭehrānī, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Ḥikmat 1981, p. 131.

109 Baḥr al-'ulūm, *Sayr va sulūk*, p. 131.

110 Jamāl al-Dīn Khwānsārī, *Sharḥ ghurar al-ḥikam*, ed. J. Urmawī, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1366 Shamsī, vol. I, p. 260, *ḥadīth* # 1040 and vol. IV, p. 191 *adīth* # 5792.

111 Nasafī, *Insān-i Kāmil*, p. 86.

112 Abū Ḥafs 'Umar Suhrawardī, *'Awārif al-ma'ārif*, tr. Q. Anṣārī, Tehran n.d., p.

113 104. Cf. *The 'Awarif al-ma'arif*, tr. H.W. Clarke, Lahore: Mohammad Ashraf 1979 repr., pp. 44-45, 72-73.

114 Ibn 'Arabī, *Rasā'il*, p. 11.

115 Khwānsārī, *Sharḥ ghurar al-ḥikam*, vol. VI, p. 3 *ḥadīth* # 10471.

116 Ibn 'Arabī, *Rasā'il*, p. 15-6.

117 Baḥr al-'ulūm, *Sayr va sulūk*, p. 150.

118 Āmidī, *Ghurar al-ḥikam*, vol. VI, p. 163 and 166 *ḥadīth* # 9918 and 9942.

119 Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, vol. II, p. 225; Majlisī, *Biḥār*, vol. XV, p. 140; cf. Baḥr al'ulūm, *Sayr va sulūk*, p. 161.

120 Baḥr al-'ulūm, *Sayr va sulūk*, p. 151-53.

121 Ibn 'Arabī, *Rasā'il*, p. 13-14; Āmidī, *Ghurar al-ḥikam*, vol. VI, p. 124 *ḥadīth* # 9758.

122 Ibn 'Arabī, *Rasā'il*, p. 17-8.

123 Al-Qur'ān, al-Isrā' (The Night Journey) 17: 79.

124 Al-Qur'ān, al-Muzammil (The Shrouded One) 73: 1-3. ==57-'Izz al-Dīn Maḥmūd Kāshānī, *Miṣbāḥ al-hidāya*, ed. J. Humā'ī, Tehran: Majlis 1946, p. 314.

125 Suhrawardī, *'Awārif al-ma'ārif*, p. 147.

126 Suhrawardī, *'Awārif al-ma'ārif*, p. 147.

127 Javād Malikī Tabrīzī, *Sayr ila Llāh*, tr. M. Ṭāhirchī, Tehran 1984, p. 106.

128 Javād Malikī Tabrīzī, *Asrār al-ṣalāt*, tr. R. Rajabzāda, Tehran 1985, p. 457.

129 Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī, *al-Asfār al-Arba'a*, ed. R. Luṭfī *et al*, 3rd edition, Beirut: Dār iḥyā' turāth al-'arabī 1981, vol. I, p. 13.

130 Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī, *al-Asfār al-Arba'a*, vol. I, p. 13, *scholia* of Muḥammad Riḍā Qumshehī.

131 Abū Najīb Suhrawardī, *Ādāb al-murīdīn*, tr. M. Shīrkhān, Tehran 1363 Shamsī, p. 72. Cf. *A Sufi rule for novices: Kitāb Ādāb al-murīdīn*, tr. M. Milson, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press 1975, p. 37.

132 Ṭabarsī, *Majma'al-bayān*, Beirut: Mu'assasat al-a'lamī 1995, vol. X, pp. 86-7.
133 Al-Qur'ān, 'Abasa (He frowned) 80: 38.
134 Suhrawardī, *'Awārif al-ma'ārif*, pp. 108-20.
135 Ibn Bazzaz. Shaykh Safi, p.546
136 Cf. S.H. Nasr, "The spiritual states in Sufism," in *Sufi essays*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1991, pp. 68-83; Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions*, pp. 98-129.
137 Al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma'*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, Leiden: Gibb Memorial Trust 1914, p. 42. Cf. Nasr, «The spiritual states,» p. 76.
138 Khwāja 'Abdallāh Anṣārī, *Ṣad maydān*, ed. Q. Anṣārī, Tehran: Ṭahūrī 1360 Shamsī. Cf. *Chemins de Dieu, trois traités spirituels*, tr. S. de Laugier de Beaureceuil, Paris: Sindbad 1985.
139 Khwāja 'Abdallāh Anṣārī, *Manāzil al-sā'irīn*, ed. A. 'Aṭwa, Cairo: Maktabat Ja'far al-Ḥadītha 1977; cf. French translation by S. de Laugier de Beaureceuil, Cairo: IFAO 1962.
140 Ravan Farhadi, *Abdullah Ansari of Herat*, Richmond: Curzon Press 1995; S. de Laugier de Beaureceuil, *Khwādja 'Abdullāh Anṣārī, mystique hanbalite*, Beirut: Dar el-Machreq 1965.
141 Shabistarī, *Gulshan-i rāz*, couplets 25-30.
142 Suhrawardī, *Ādāb al-murīdīn*, pp. 775. Cf. *A Sufi rule*, p. 38.
143
144 Concerning these relationships see Nasr, Ideals and Realities of Islam, chapter V
145 'On ne peut plus, en tout rigeur, faire de "Soufisme" et de mystique musulman deux termes interchangeables depuis quel' on sait, en particulier grace aux travaux de H. Corbin, qu'il existe une mystique musulmane - la gnose ismaelienne et imamite notamment - qui ne se reconnait pas "soufique". Toutefois, ce qui est dit ici du tasawwuf a ses debuts vaut egalement pour cette mystique, ou gnose non soufique, laquelle a aussi sa source dans les enseignements du Prophe'te et de certains compagnons, don't surtout 'Ali.' J. L. Michon, Le soufi maracain Anmed ibn Ajiba et son mi'raj (These de doctorat, Faculte des Lettres, Universite de Paris, 1960, p. 2, n. 1.0
146 Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddimah, trans. By F. Rosenthal, vol. II, New York, 1958, p. 187. Ibn Khaldun continues, 'The fact that (the Sufis) restrict (pr4ecedence in mysticism) to 'Ali smells strongly of pro-Shi'ah sentiment. This and other afore mentioned Sufi ideas show that the Sufis have adopted pro-Shiah sentiments and have become enmeshed in them.' Ibid., p. 187.

On this question see also the extensive and well-documented work of kamil al-Shibi, al-Silah bayn al-tasawwuf wa'l-tashayyu', 2 vols., Baghdad, 1963-64.
147 This anachronistic practice is criticized by John B. Taylor in his 'Ja' far al- Sadiq, Spiritual Forebear of the Sufis', Islamic Culture, vol. XL, no. 2, April 1966, pp. 97 ff.

[148] So many—sided is this Sunni sentiment—in hadiths, in the Sufi orders, in guilds, in popular tales—that not only in its support of the original 'Alid claims but in its whole piety Sunni Islam can be called half Shi'ite'. M. G. S. Hodgson, 'How did the early Shia become Sectarian?" Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. 75, 1955, p. 4. See also J. B. Taylor, 'An Approach to the Emergence of Heterodxy in Medieval Islam', Religious Studies, vol. II, April 1967, p. 202, where the words of Hodgson are also quoted.

In certain arteas of the Islamic world, particularly in the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent, one meets among Sufis Certain groups as devoted to the Shi'ite Imams, especially 'Ali and Husayn, as any Shi'ite could be, yet completely Sunni in their practice of the law (*madhhab*).

[149] See F. Schuon, *'De la tradition monotheiste'*, Etudes Traditionelles, 1933, p. 257.

[150] See H. Corbin, 'L 'Imam cache et la renovation de l'homme en theologie shi'ite', Eranos - Jahrbuch, 1960, pp. 87 ff.

[151] On the 'cycles of initiation and prophecy', see S. H. Nasr, Ideals and Realities of Islam, pp. 87 andd 161; and H. Corbin, op.cit.

[152] Hakim al-Tirmidhi devoted a major work to this question entitled khatm al-awliya which has been recently edited by O. Yahya and which had much influence upon Ibn'Arabi and later Sufis.

[153] Ibn Arabi and following him Da'ud al-Qaysari consider Christ as the universal 'seal of sanctity', and Ibn 'arabi refers indirectly to himself as the 'particular seal of sanctity' whereas most Shi'ite authors believe these titles belong to 'Ali and the Mahdi respectively. In this delicate question the distinction between the 'universal seal of sanctity' and the 'particular or Muhammadan seal of sanctity' must be kepi especialiy in mind. In any case this is a point of contention between Ibn 'Arabi and even his most ardent Shi'ite followers such as Sayyid Haydar Amuli.

[154] This *hadith* appears in many different forms in Shi'ite sourcese such as the Ghayat al-maram, Tehran, 1272, pp. 287 ff.

[155] Ibn Abi Jumhur, *Kitab al-mujli*, Teran, 1329, p. 379, This hadith has been mentioned with slight variations by many Shi'ite gnostics and Sufis. See for example, Muhammad 'Ali Sabziwari, Tuhfat al-'abbasiyyah, Shiraz, 1326, pp. 93-4. Many other Shi'ite and also Sunni authors like Ibn Abi' l-Hadld, Maytham al-Bahrani and Sayyid Haydar Amuli have refereed to this hadith. See *al-Shibi, al-Silah bayn al-tasawwuf wa'l-tashayyu'*, vol. II, p. 117.

[156] On the role of the Imam in Shi'ite spirituality see the many works of H. Corbin in the Eranos - Jahrbuch especially *'L'Imam cache et la renovation de l'homme en theologie Shi'ite', and 'Pour une morphologie de la spiritualite Shi'ite'*, Eranos-Jahrbuch, vol. XXX, 1961.

[157] Sayyid Haydar Amuli, La philosophie shi'ite, p. 223; and also quoted by Kamil al-Shibi, al-Fikr al-shi'I wa'l-naza'at al-sufiyyah, Baghdad, 1966, pl 123

158 Concerning the Sufi doctrine of the universal man see the translation of al-Jili's al-Insan al-kamil by T. Burckhardt as De l'homme universel, Lyons, 1953; also R. Guenon, Symbolism of the Cross, trans. By A. Macnab, London, 1958.

159 Al-Shibi in his *al-Silah . . .*, vol. II, pp. 52-3, writes that Ibn 'Arabi has made use of Shi'ite sources in formulating his doctrines of the *haqiqat al- muhammadiyyah, wahdat al—wujud* and the Mahdi.

160 On Imam Ja'far's teaching on this subject as it pertains to both Shi'ism and Sufism see Taylor, 'Ja'far al-Sadiq, Spiritual Forebear of the Sufis', pp. 101-2.

161 This is a very complex question which of necessity can only be treated here in very summary fashion. A fairly extensive survey of this question is found in the two works of *al-Shibi, al-Silah . . . and al-Fikr al-shi'I wa'l-naza at al-sufiyyah*, but even these two scholarly works deal mostly with the central lands of Islam leaving out of discussion the Maghrib, much of Central Asia and especially India, where the relation between Shi'ism and Sufism has produced results not found elsewhere, results which should be closely studied.

162 On the pretext that the *Nahi al-balaghah* is not by 'Ali but comes from the pen of its compiler Sayyid Sharif Radi, many Western orientalists have simply dis-missed it as unauthentic. First of all many of the sayings compiled in the Nahj al-balaghah exist in texts antedatin g Radi, secondly their style is totally different from the many books that have survived from Radi's pen and finally their innate quality is sufficient guarantee of their celestial inspiration. Toda there are too many works of purely spiritual character which are brushed asid by simply attaching the name 'pseudo' to them or by doubting their authority with total disregard for the in nate value of their content.

A few years ago in a session in which the famous Shi'ite theologian theologian and gnostic, 'Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i, and Professor Henry Corbin were present, Professor Corbin asked the Shi'ite authority as to whether the *Nahj al—balaghah* was the work of 'Ali, the first Imam. 'Allamah Tabataba'i answered, 'He who has written the Nahj al-balaghah is for us the Imam even if he lived a century ago.'

In any case it is curious that through completely inadequate historical arguments which do not at all disprove its authenticity, the Nahj al-balaghah, a book which is the most revered in Shi'ism after thd Quran and prophetic sayings and which has taught so many famous Arab writers such as Kurd 'Ali and Taha Husayn how to write eloquent Arabic, has been neglected to this extent.

163 *Zabur -i âl-i Muhammad.*

164 See especially his *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane*, Paris, 1954, and Recueil *de textes inedits concernant l'histoire de la mystique en pays d'Islam*, Paris, 1929.

165 The relationship between the Imams and the first generations of zuhhad that later became known as Sufis is dicussed by 'Allamah Tabataba'I in Shi'ite Islam, translated and edited by S. H. Nasr, part II, section 3 (in press).

166 See s. H. Nasr, An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines, chapter I.

167 See al-Shibi, al-Fikr al-shi'i . . . , pp. 73 ff.

168 This monumental work has been edited for the first time by H. Corbin and O. Yahya under the title of *La philosophie shi'ite* (see chapter VI, note 8) with an extensive introduction dealing with his life and ideas.

169 See the previous chapter.

170 This work, called the *Manaqib*, has also been commented upon in Persian. See Musa Khalkhali, *Sharh manaqib Muhyi al—Din ibn 'Arabi*, Tehran, 1322.

171 See al-Shibi, al-Fikr al-shi'i . . . , pp. 179-244, 302-27.

172 Concerning his life and works see I. Aubin, Materiaux pour la biographi de *Shah Ni'matollah Wali Kermani*, Tehran-Paris, 1956 and the several studies devoted to him by J. Nourbakhsh, the present Qulb of the order, published by the Ni-'matullahi Khaniqah in Tehran during the last decade.

173 Concerning Shaykh Nurbakhsh and also the Kubrawiyyah and their importance in connection with Persia's becoming Shi'ite see the articles of M. Mole in the *Revue des etudes islamiques* from 1959 to 1963.

174 The text of his declaration is quoted by al-Shibi, al-Fikr al-shi'I . . . , p. 335.

175 Concerning the different Sufi orders in the Shi'ite climate of Persia see M. Mole, Les mystiques musulmans, chapter IV.

176 Concerning the Baktashis and their affiliation with Shi'ism see J. Birge, The Bektashi Order of Devishes, London, 1937, chapter VI.

177 Based on the original historic sources such as 'Alam ara-yi abbasi and Rawdat al-safa, many historical works have been devoted to the origin of the Safavi9ds by such scholars as Minorsky, Togan, Hinz, Aubin, Savory and others. See for example Z. V. Togan, *'Sur l'origines des safavides'*, Melanges Louis Mas signon, Paris, 1957, vol. 3, pp. 345-57. The work of W. Hinz, Aufstieg zum Nationalstaat im funfzehnten Jahrhundert, Berlin, 1936, is of particular value for its historical analysis.

178 Concerning these figures see S. H. Nasr, 'The School of Ispahan' and 'Sadr al-Din Shirazi in M. M. Sharif (ed.), A History of Muslim Philosophy, vol. II, Wiesbaden, 1966, and H. Corbin, 'Confessions extatiques de Mir Damad, Melanges Louis Massignon, pp. 331-78.

179 See Sayyid 'Abd al - Hujjat Balaghi, *Maqalat al-hunafa fi maqamat Shams al-'Urafâ.*

180 Concerning these figures see R. Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens. Erster Teil: Die Affiliationen*, Wiesbaden, 1965, pp. 33 ff.

181 See S. H. Nasr, 'Sabziwari, in A History of Muslim Philosophy, vol. II, and the Introduction of T. Izutsu, 'The Fundamental Structure of Sabziwarian Metaphysics', to Sabziwari, *Sharh-i manzumah*, ed. By M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu, Tehran, 1969.

182 On the spiritual significance of Khadir or Khidr see: L. Massignon, 'Elie et son role transhistorique, Khadiriya en Islam', *Etudes carmelitaines*: Elie

le pro-phete, vol. II, Paris, 1956, pp. 269-90. Massignon has also devoted numberous other articles to this subject most of which have appeared in the Revue des etudes islamiques. There are also many valuable references to initiation in Sufism through Khidr and to the *afrad* who have received such initiation in the writings of R. Guenon on initiation.

183 This article was written by the present *qutb* of the Order, Dr. Hajj Nor `Ali Tabandeh, Majdhub `Alishah, in response to a letter inquiring about the relations among Shi`ism, Sufism and Gnosticism (*'irfan*). The author has explained himself in simple language at the request of the correspondent. It was published in Persian in the Journal *Erfan-e Iran*, (2000) Vol. 2, No. 7, 11-23.

184 Qur'an (20:25-28)

185 This word comes from *sha'b* meaning folk, nation or tribe. [Tr.]

186 Qur'an (49:13).

187 Qur'an (53:3-4)

188 The literal meaning of *walayah* is 'nearness, closeness', and derivative meanings are 'authority, friendship'. It is through prophecy that Islam is revealed, and through walayah that faith is acquired. This is why *walayah* is said to be the interior dimension of prophecy, and is often translated as 'sainthood'. In Shi'i theology, Muhummad (*s*) was both prophet and saint (*wali`*), and though he was the seal (or last) of the prophets, the Imams (may peace be upon them) continued the line of his sainthood (*walayah*). [Tr.]

189 Shaykh Farid al-Din `Attar, "*Tadhkirah al-Awliyya* Muhammad Isti'lami, ((Tehran: Zavvar, 1984), 15. [Tr.]

190 There is a reason for the differences in the lives of the Imams, for exampl Hadrat Ja`far Sadiq and Imam Hasan with `Ali, and this is another problem that we have to pass over for the moment.

191 *Wasayalt* means that the successor should be appointed according to the final testament of the predecessor, not by the election of the people. 1Tr.]

192 The word *pir* in Persian means "old man" or "elder", and in Sufism it is used to refer to the head of an Order or guide. [Tr.]

193 Translated into Farsi by Afsaneh Munfarid (Tehran: 1998), p. 214

194 The famous Persian king (531-579) of the Sassanid dynasty. [Tr.]

195 This is an Arabic saying, commonly used in Iranian as well as Arab culture. [Tr.]

196 See Qur'an (6:76).

197 See Qur'an (6:79).

198 Qur'an (6:75)

199 Mawlānā Jalāl al-dīn Rūmī (d. 1274), perhaps the greatest Persian Sufi poet. Born in Balkh in present-day Afghanistan, he moved to Konya in Anatolia where he founded a Sufi brotherhood. He was buried in Konya and his tomb has become a major Sufi centre of learning and practice. He is best known of two works of poetry, the didactic anecdotal collection of stories, the *Mathnawī*, and his

collection of mystical odes dedicated to his inspiration Shams-i Tabrīzī, known as the *Dīvān-i kabīr-i Shams-i Tabrīzī*. See the recent work of Franklin Lewis, *Rumi: past and present, East and West*, Oxford: Oneworld Publications 1999.

200 Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Ḥāfeẓ Shīrāzī (d. 1389), great Persian lyric poet and master of the *ghazal* form. See A.J. Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1958, pp. 329-63.

201 Shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-'Āmilī (d. 1621), Safavid polymath and Shaykh al-Islām in Isfahan under Shāh 'Abbās I. For a study of his literary achievements, see C.E. Bosworth, *Bahā' al-Dīn al-'Āmilī and his literary anthologies*, Manchester: Manchester University Press 1989.

202 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Baqara 2: 269.

203 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Jum'a 62: 2 jjj

204 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-A'rāf 7: 143.

205 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Namal 27: 80

206 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Naḥl 16: 108-109

207 9-Qur'ān, Sūrat Qāf 50: 37

208 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Naḥl 16: 108-109

209 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Hūd 11: 20-21

210 Rūmī, *Mathnavī, daftar* II: 73-74

211 Rūmī, *Mathnavī, daftar* I: 3445

212 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Fāṭir 35: 28

213 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Isrā' 17: 107-109

214 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Mujādila 58: 11

215 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Ḥajj 22: 46

216 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-A'rāf 7: 179

217 Qur'ān, Sūrat Yūnus 10: 100

218 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Mulk 67: 10

219 Rūmī, *Mathnavī, daftar* I: 3446-3461

220 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-A'rāf 7: 175-176

221 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Mā'ida 5: 112-115

222 Qur'ān, Sūrat al-Ḥijr 29: 15 and Sūrat Ṣād 72: 38.

223 That is, *aḥādīth* or reports from the Prophet and the Shī'ite Imāms.

224 On the hierarchy of knowledge, see Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Science and civilization in Islam*, 2nd edn., Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society 1987, pp. 59-64, and Osman Bakar, *The classification of the sciences in Islamic Philosophy*, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society 2000.

225 On this critical theme, see 'Allāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Risālat al-wilāya*, Tehran: Intishārāt-i ḥikmat 1374 shamsī, and Ḥasanzāda Āmulī, "Vilāyat-i takvīnī," in *Majmū'a-yi maqālāt*, Qum: Daftar-i tablīghāt-i Islāmī 1375 shamsī, pp. 31-82.

226 Rūmī, *Mathnavī-yi ma'navī*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, London: Gibb Memorial Trust 1925-40, vol. II, verse 2943.

227 Cf. Kātibī Qazwīnī, *al-Risāla al-Shamsiyya* in *Biblioteca Indica Appendix I*, ed. A. Sprenger, Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press 1854, p. 3. This four-fold schema has important precursors in Neoplatonic and late antique pedagogy and curricular formation. See I. Hadot, "Les introductions aux commentaires exégètiques,» in *Les règles de l'interpretation*, ed. M. Tardieu, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France 1987, pp. 99-122.

228 This four-fold schema has important precursors in Neoplatonic and late antique pedagogy and curricular formation. See I. Hadot, "Les introductions aux commentaires exégètiques,» in *Les règles de l'interpretation*, ed. M. Tardieu, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France 1987, pp. 99-122.

229 Dāwūd al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qayṣarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*, ed. S.J. Āshtiyānī, Qum: Daftar-i tablīghāt-i islāmī 1991, p. 100.

230 In some of his texts, he privileges mysticism over philosophy. For example, in his hierarchy of sciences in *Iksīr al-'ārifīn* in *Rasā'il*, Tehran lithograph 1885, pp. 279-86, he places the sciences of 'states' (*aḥwāl*) at the culmination of human noetic inquiry. Another philosopher who regards mysticism as the culmination of inquiry is Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311), who completes his encyclopaedia *Durrat al-Taj li-ghurrat al-Dubāj* with a *khātima* on mysticism—see MS Majlis-i Shūrā 4720 fols. 596-620; cf. J. Walbridge, "A Sufi scientist of the thirteenth century: The mystical ideas and practices of Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī," in *The heritage of Sufism volume II: The legacy of medieval Persian Sufism*, ed. L. Lewisohn, rpt., Oxford: Oneworld 1999, pp. 326-40.

231 Cf. the pioneering discussion of Henry Corbin in his introduction to Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī, *Kitāb al-Mashā'ir (Le Livre des Pénétrations métaphysique* rpt., Tehran: Ṭahūrī 1982, pp. 62-75.

232 See Fazlur Rahman, *The philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1975, pp. 27-41.

233 See Sajjad H Rizvi, *Modulation of being (tashkīk al-wujūd) in the philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā Shīrāzī*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University 2000.

234 Love mysticism is a critical aspect of Sufism. For a general appraisal, see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1975, pp. 130-48. On its role in Rūmī's poetry, see William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1983. On Corbin's analysis of the *fideli*, see *En Islam Iranien III: les fidèles d'amour*, Paris: Gallimard 1972, pp. 9-146.

235 Rūmī, *Mathnawī-yi Ma'nawī*, ed. R.A. Nicholson, London: Gibb Memorial Trust 1925-40, vol. I, verses 112-16.

236 On these themes, see William Chittick, *The self-disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn 'Arabī's cosmology*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1998, pp. 52-57, 100-17, 329-31 *inter alia*.

237 Al-Qur'ān al-Wāqi'a 56: 10.

238 Al-Qur'ān al-An'ām 6: 162-63.

239 Referring to the famous *ḥadīth* of the hidden treasure, see Chittick, *Self-disclosure*, pp. 21-22, 70, 211, 329.

240 Al-Qur'ān al-'Ankabūt 29: 2.

241 Al-Qur'ān al-Aḥzāb 33: 40-41.

242 Al-Qur'ān Hūd 11: 56.

243 Al-Qur'ān Yāsīn 36: 2-4.

244 Al-Qur'ān al-Fātiḥa 1: 6-7

245 Al-Qur'ān al-Nisā' 4: 69.

246 Al-Qur'ān al-'Aṣr 103: 1-3.

247 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Ḥikma al-muta'āliya fī l-Asfār al-'aqliyya al-arba'a*, eds. R. Luṭfī *et al*, 3rd edn., Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-turāth al-'arabī 1981, vol. I, p. 13.

248 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, pp. 13-18.

249 The only scholar, to my knowledge, who has considers these glosses is Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī and his transcendent theosophy*, Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy 1977, pp. 57-61.

250 Sayyid Abū l-Ḥasan Rafī'ī Qazvīnī, *Ghawṣī dar baḥr-i ma'rifat*, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Islām 1376 shamsī, pp. 232-36.

251 Cf. 'Alī al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-ta'rīfāt*, ed. A. Sprenger, rpt. Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān 1969, p. 124; J.W. Morris, "'He moves you through the land and sea . . .'" in *The Journey of the Heart*, ed. J. Mercer, Oxford: Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society 1996, pp. 41-69.

252 R.C. Zaehner, *Mysticism sacred and profane*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1957, pp. 87, 150ff.

253 *Aflūṭīn 'ind al-'arab: Ūthūlūjīyā*, ed. 'A. Badawī, rpt, Qum: Intishārāt- Bīdār 1413 qamarī, p. 22; tr. G. Lewis in *Plotini Opera*, eds. P. Henry & H. Schwyzer, Brussels: Desclée de Brouwer 1951-73, vol. II, p. 225. For discussion, see Fritz Zimmermann, "The origins of the Theology of Aristotle," in *Pseudo-Aristotle in the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Kraye *et al*, London: The Warburg Institute 1986, pp. 138-39. On the doffing metaphor as the quest for the true self, see Lloyd Gerson, *Plotinus*, London: Routledge 1994, p. 271. Instances of the use of this metaphor and quotation include Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, ed. O. Yahia, Cairo: IFAO 1972, vol. II, p. 219.

254 Cf. Morris, "'He moves you . . .'" p. 59.

255 In another work consonant with his monism, he insists that there are only three journeys: from Him (*min 'indihi*), to Him (*ilayhi*) and in Him (*fīhi*). See Ibn 'Arabī, *Kitāb al-isfār 'an natā'ij al-asfār* in *Rasā'il*, rpt., Beirut: Dār Ṣādir 1997, p. 457.

256 Qāshānī (sic!), *al-Iṣṭilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, ed. A. Sprenger, rpt. with tr. N. Safwat as *A glossary of Sufi technical terms*, London: The Octagon Press 1991, p. 87 (Arabic), p. 62 (English).

257 A reference to al-Qur'ān al-Najm (The Star) 53: 7.

258 These two terms refer to al-Qur'ān al-Najm (The Star) 53: 8.

259 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, p. 18.

260 Āmulī, *Jāmi' al-asrār*, eds. H. Corbin & O. Yahia, Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien 1969, pp. 147, 339-40, 494, 402.

261 Referring to a manuscript in Tehran University Central Library 2401/2 mentioned by Dānishpazhūh, *Fihrist-i nushka-hā-yi khaṭṭī dar Kitābkhāna-yi markazī-yi Dānishgāh-i Tehran*, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1339- shamsī, vol. IX, pp. 1012-13.

262 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, p. 13.

263 Cf. W. Chittick, *The Sufi path of Knowledge: Ibn 'Arabī's metaphysics of imagination*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1989, pp. 5, 122, 185, 204.

264 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, p. 18.

265 Al-Qushayrī, *al-Risāla*, ed. 'A. Maḥmūd, Cairo: Dār al-ma'ārif n.d., vol. I, pp. 153-82.

266 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, p. 18. On subtle substances, see Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical dimensions of Islam*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1975, pp. 174, 389.

267 See the excellent discussion in Sachiko Murata, *The Tao of Islam*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1993.

268 Cf. Steven Wasserstrom, *Religion after religion*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1999, pp. 66ff; M. Sells, *Mystical languages of Unsaying*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1994, p. 21.

269 Cf. Qumshehī in Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, p. 14.

270 Āmulī, *Jāmi' al-asrār*, p. 394 considers sanctity to begin at the culmination of the first journey since one has traversed the waystations and stages and become annihilated in the Truth.

271 Reference to al-Qur'ān al-Inshirāḥ (Expansion) 94: 1.

272 Kāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt*, p. 23 (Arabic), 24 (English).

273 Āmulī, *Jāmi' al-asrār*, p. 402.

274 Āmulī, *Jāmi' al-asrār*, p. 546.

275 Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, pp. 92ff.

276 Cf. Qumshehī in Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Asfār*, vol. I, p. 16

277 Cf. D. Black, "al-Fārābī," in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, eds. S.H. Nasr & O. Leaman, London: Routledge 1996, vol. I, pp. 190-92.

278 Ayn al-Quzat Hamadani, ed. Afif A'sirian, Tehran: Tehran University Press, pp. 4-7.

279 *Ibid.* Chapter 16.

280 *Ibid.* Chapter 17.

281 *Ibid.* Chapter 18.

282 *Ibid.* Chapter 20.

283 *Ibid.* Chapter 21.

284 *Ibid.* Chapter 22.
285 *Ibid.* Chapter 23.
286 *Ibid.* Chapter 24.
287 *Ibid.* Chapter 25.
288 *Ibid.* Chapter 26.
289 *Ibid.* Chapter 28.
290 *Ibid.* Chapter 45.
291 *Ibid.* Chapter 59.
292 *Ibid.* Chapter 61.
293 *Ibid.* Chapter 62.
294 *Ibid.* Chapter 63.
295 *Ibid.* Chapter 65.
296 *Ibid.* Chapters 82-85.
297 *Ibid.* Chapter 86.
298 *Ibid.* Chapter 88.
299 *Ibid.* Chapter 91.
300 *Ibid.* Chapter 92.
301 *Ibid.* Chapter 94.
302 *Ibid.* Chapter 95.
303 *Ibid.* Chapter 96.
304 *Ibid.* Chapter 97.
305 Badi' al-Zaman Furuzanfar, "Risālih dar Tahqiq-e Ahwāl wa Zindeganī-e Mulāwī," Tehran, footnote on p.43; Taj al-Dīn Kharazmī, *Jawāhir al-Asrār*, Isfahan, p. 52.
306 'Afīf al-Dīn Sulayman al-Talamsānī died in Damascus.
307 Mu'ayyid al-Dīn Jandī was initiated by Qūnyavī and wrote the first detailed commentary in Arabic on the Fusūs (Chittick, *Ibn al-Arabi*, www.arches.uga.edu).
308 Sa'īd al-Dīn Farghanī put together Qūnyavī's lectures on Ibn al-Fārid's poetry (ibid.).
309 Jandī taught the Fusūs to Abd al-Razzaq Kāshāni. Kāshāni's commentary was one of the most widely disseminated (ibid.)
310 Dāwūd Qaysarī was Kāshāni's student, and also wrote an Arabic commentary on the Fusūs (ibid.).
311 Āmulī was influential in bringing Ibn al-'Arabī into mainstream Shi'a thought (ibid.).
312 Sayyid Yahya Yasrābī, *Irfan-e Nazari*, Tehran, chapter 3, section 1.
313 Sadr al-Din Qūnyawī, *I'jaz al-Bayān fi Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān*, Hyderabad, 1989 exegesis of the Surah Fatihah.
314 *Ibid.*, pp. 16-18.
315 *Ibid.*, pp. 18-20.
316 *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.
317 *Ibid.*, p. 21.
318 *Ibid.*, pp. 22-26.

319 *Ibid.*, pp. 26-32.
320 *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.
321 Sayyid Heidar 'Amulī, *Nass al-Nasūs fi Sharh al-Fusūs al-Hikam*, bakhsh 3, rokn 3, fasl 1.
322 *The Qur'ān* (Muhammad: 30, Bagharah: 273).
323 *Ibid.*
324 'Amulī, p. 474.
325 *Ibid*, p. 475.
326 *Ibid*, p. 476.
327 *Ibid*, p. 477.
328 *Ibid*, p. 479.
329 *Ibid8.*
330 This is what maintains the specificity of the essence.
331 *Ibid*, pp. 480-481.
332 *Ibid*, pp. 282-284.
333 *Ibid*, pp. 484-485.
334 *Ibid*, p. 486.
335 *Ibid.*
336 *Ibid*, p. 488-489.
337 *Ibid*, p. 489.
338 *Ibid*, pp. 489-490.
339 *Ibid*, p. 491.
340 *Ibid.*
341 *The Qur'ān*, Āle Imrān: 7.
342 'Amulī, pp. 493-494.
343 *Ibid.*
344 *Ibid*, summarized.
345 *Ibid*, pp. 500-501.
346 *Ibid*, pp. 501-526.
347 *Ibid*, charts no. 27-29.
348 *Ibid*, pp. 526-527.
349 In the Shi'ite world, Fayd Kashani, the son-in-law and famous student of Mulla Sadra, did the same sort of work as Ghazali to revive the true meaning of knowledge. In his book *Al-Mahaja al-Bayda fi Tahdhib al-Ihya*, as is evident from the title, by referring to narrations attributed to the Shi'ite Imams, he sought to revise Ghazali's book, or as he himself put it, to revive it
350 In a dream, Sohravardi, who was seriously occupied with the problem of knowledge and was unable to solve it, saw Aristotle, and asked him for the solution to this problem. Aristotle replied to him, "Return to your soul. The problem will be solved for you." Then he asked, "Among the philosophers of Islam, which ones have reached the stage of understanding true knowledge?" After denying that Farabi and Ibn Sina were true philosophers, he mentions

some of the great Sufis such as Bayazid Bastami and Sahl Tustari, and continues, "They are truly philosophers and theosophists who have not stopped with what is commonly accepted as knowledge [i.e., representational knowledge], rather have reached intuitive unitive knowledge by presence." Sohravardi, *Talwihat* in *Opera Metaphysica et Mystical* 1, ed. Henry Corbin, (Tehran: 1993), p. 70-73. Sohravardi's account of the vision is translated in full in Mehdi Ha'iri Yazdi's *Knowledge by Presence* (Tehran: 1982), 329-337.

351 This term, *al-hikmah al-muta'aliyah*, was used long before Mulla Sadra by Sufis such as Qaysari. It even appears in the works of the peripatetic philosophers. (See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Sadr al-Din Shirazi and His Transcendent Theosophy* (Tehran: 1978), p. 85.) Ibn Sina used this term in his *Isharat* when he speaks of the souls of the celestial bodies. He says that only those who possess transcendent wisdom (*al-hikmah al-muta'aliyyah*) can understand this. In his commentary on this part of *Isharat*, Tusi says: "Peripatetic wisdom is purely discursive, while this problem and those like it can only be solved completely through discussion and reasoning accompanied by unveiling (*kashf*) and intuition (*zawq*), and the wisdom that includes it is transcendent wisdom, in contrast to the former wisdom." *Al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat ma' al-Sharh Tusi*, (Tehran: A.H. 1403), Vol. 3, p. 401

352 Sadr al-Din Shirazi (Mulla Sadra), *Se 'Asl*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, (Tehran, 1961).

353 *Se 'Asl*, p. 11.

354 Se 'Asl, p. 13.

355 *Se 'Asl*, p. 28.

356 *Se 'Asl*, p. 32.

357 *Se 'Asl*, p. 6.

358 *Se 'Asl*, p. 7.

359 *Se 'Asl*, p. 14. This issue will be explained in detail later.

360 *Se 'Asl*, p. 6. The same idea has been the source of the illuminative theory of knowledge in Sohravardi and in many other theories of the medieval period.

361 *Se 'Asl*, p. 44.

362 *Se 'Asl*, p. 7.

363 Se 'Asl, p. 14.

364 *Se 'Asl*, p. 13.

365 *Se 'Asl*, p. 14.

366 Se 'Asl, p. 16.

367 *Se 'Asl*, p. 23.

368 *Se 'Asl*, p. 26.

369 *Se 'Asl*, p. 27. As will be seen, Mulla Sadra uses this idea in his theory of the union of the knower with the known.

370 *Se 'Asl*, p. 68.

371 *Se 'Asl*, p. 24.

372 *Se 'Asl*, p. 36.
373 *Se 'Asl*, p. 49.
374 *Se 'Asl*, p. 56-57.
375 *Se 'Asl*, p. 58.
376 Sadr al-Din Shirazi (Mulla Sadra), *Al-Hikmat al-Muta'aliyyah fi al-Asfar al-Aqliyyah al-'Arba'ah* (Beirut: 1981), Vol. 3, p. 297. (Hereafter this work is cited as *Asfar*.)
377 Mulla Sadra, *Tassawur wa Tasdiq*, Persian translation, *Agahi va Guvahi*, ed. and tr. Mehdi Ha'iri Yazdi, 2nd ed., (Tehran: 1988), p. 4.
378 *Agahi va Guvahi*, p. 5.
379 *Agahi va Guvahi*, p. 4.
380 The correspondence theory of truth is attributed to Aristotle while the pre-Socratic thinkers considered truth to be a kind of unveiling, *aletheia*. The knowledge appropriate to the pre-Socratic notion of truth is knowledge by presence. Mulla Sadra, like Sohravardi, considers those thinkers to have had great mystical knowledge. Mulla Sadra, *Risalah fi al-Huduth*, ed. Husayn Musavian (Tehran: 1999), pp. 152-241.
381 Mulla Sadra devotes his book *Tassawur wa Tasdiq* to an explanation of how acquired knowledge is divided into concepts and assertions.
382 Sohravardi, *Kitab al-Mashari' wa'l-Mutarihat* in *Opera Metaphysica et Mystical 1*, ed. Henry Corbin, (Tehran: 1993), p. 485.
383 Sohravardi, *Talwihat* in *Opera Metaphysica et Mystical 1*, ed. Henry Corbin, (Tehran: 1993), p. 72.
384 Sohravardi, *Hikmat al-Israq* in *Opera Metaphysica et Mystical II*, ed. Henry Corbin, (Tehran: 1993), p. 114.
385 *Asfar*, Vol. 1, p. 263.
386 Ibn 'Arabi and his followers have discussed the view of the Sufis about mental and external existence and the different *hadrats* in detail. One of the best of these discussions is found in Qaysari's commentary on Ibn 'Arabi's *Bezels of Wisdom, Sharh Fusus al-Hikam*, ed., Sayyid Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani (Tehran: 1996), pp. 66-67, 89-93.
387 *Asfar*, Vol. 3, p. 297.
388 *Nahayat al-Hikmat* (Qom: n.d.), p. 211.
389 Mulla Sadra, *Kitab al-Masha'ir*, ed., Henry Corbin, 2nd ed. (Tehran: 1984), p. 50.
390 *Asfar*, Vol. 3, p. 278.
391 *Asfar*, Vol. 3, p. 278.
392 *Asfar*, Vol. 3, p. 278.
393 *The Metaphysics of Mulla Sadra*, tr., Parviz Morewedge, (New York and Tehran: 1992), p. 65.
394 This proof is also presented in the *Asfar*, Vol. 3, pps. 313-316.
395 *Masha'ir*, p. 64-65.
396 *Masha'ir*, p. 64-65.

397 Some of Mulla Sadra's commentators have come to the conclusion that despite his explicit denial in *Isharat wa Tanbihat*, part 7, Ibn Sina was in agreement with this position which he seems to support in his *Shifa*, *Mabda' wa Ma'ad*, and *Nijat*. See Hasan Zadeh Amuli, *Ittihad 'Aqil bi Ma'qul* (Tehran: A.H. 1404), pp. 18-22. After reviewing the arguments of Ibn Sina against the unity of the knower and the known, Mulla Sadra himself alludes to the fact that Ibn Sina seems to approve of it to some extent in his *Mabda' wa Ma'ad*. See *Asfar*, Vol. 3, pps. 333-334.

398 With regard to the background to this topic in Sufism, in addition to being mentioned in the works of Ibn 'Arabi and Qunawi, Sabzivari refers to the following lines from Rumi's *Mathnavi: O brother, you are that same thought (of yours); as for the rest (of you), you are (only) bone and fibre.If your thought is a rose, you are a rose-garden; and if it is a thorn, you are fuel for the bath-stove. The Mathnawi of Jalal'uddin Rumi*, ed. and tr., R. A. Nicholson, Vol. II, p. 236. See Sabzivari, *Sharh Mathnavi*, ed., M. Burujerdi (Tehran: 1995), Vol. 1, p. 241.

399 *Asfar*, Vol. 8, p. 223.

400 *Asfar*, Vol. 3, pps. 321-327.

401 This definition of wisdom or philosophy (*hikmah*) implies spiritual wayfaring in the acquisition of knowledge. This is true philosophy, according to Mulla Sadra, and he refers to this in various works, including *Asfar*, Vol. 2, p. 18.

402 In *Se 'Asl*, p. 105, Mulla Sadra distinguishes these two journeys with respect to whether creatures are the mirror of God or vice versa.

403 One can translate this key term either as 'gnostic' or as 'knower'; while 'gnosis' as the translation of *ma'rifa* has the advantage—so long as it is shorn of its association with the Christian heresy of Gnosticism—of suggesting spiritual as opposed to conventional knowledge, 'knowledge' has the advantage that it can also be used as a verb, which brings it closer to the root of *ma'rifa*, which is *'arafa*: 'he knew'.

404 *Al-Junayd: Life, Personality and Writings*, p.79. Edited and translated by A.H. Abdel-Kader, London, Luzac & Co., 1962.

405 *TawḤíd*, as the verbal noun of the second form of the verb *waḥada*, is more literally translated as 'making one'. At once complementing *and* transcending the theological process of making the object of worship 'one', the metaphysical mode of 'making one' involves the whole of existence. Thus the first testimony of Islam, 'there is no god but God' becomes, in the perspective of *ma'rifa*, 'there is no reality but the Real'. This will be more fully discussed in the final section.

406 Another definition of Sufism is again apposite here, in pointing to the full realization of the spiritual essence of the religion in the souls of the first great Muslims, despite the relatively undeveloped state of formal doctrinal articulation of this essence at this early period. The following is quoted by 'Alí al-Hujwírí (d.456/1063) in his *Kashf al-Maḥjúb*, one of the most definitive

of the classic manuals of early Sufism: 'Today, Sufism is a name without a reality; formerly it was a reality without a name.' *Kashf al-Maḥjúb*, p.44. Tr. R.A. Nicholson, Lahore, Islamic Book Service, 1992.

407 On the universality of sanctity (*walâya*) as opposed to the specificity of prophecy (*nubuwwah*), see Ibn al-'Arabí's position in D.Gril, (Tr.) 'Le terme du voyage', Ch. VI of M. Chodkiewicz, ed. *Les Illuminations de La Mecque*, Paris, Sindbad, 1988. In essence, the position can be summed up thus: while the consciousness of the saint *qua* saint is superior to that of the prophet *qua* prophet, nonetheless the sanctity of the prophet is greater than that of the saint. The source of the sanctity of the saint is the sanctity of the prophet, even if the universal consciousness opened up in sanctity transcends the specificitie attendant upon the revelation of a Law for a particular community at a particul time. Also see, for a more extended treatment of sanctity in the writings of Ib al-'Arabí, M. Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des Saints*, Paris, Gallimard, 1986.

408 Quoted by R.A. Nicholson in *The Mystics of Islam*, p.103. London, G.Bell, 1914. Nicholson does not give any reference for this quotation, but we think that the word he translates here as 'feelings' is *aḥwāl*, and should therefore be 'spiritual states'. He occasionally translates the word *ḥāl* as 'feeling' in the *Kashf al-Maḥjúb*, op. cit.; see, for example, *inter alia*, pp. 267 and 382.

409 Also, it was held that through *ma'rifa* the less obvious, underlying and esoteric dimensions of scripture could be grasped. Al-Ghazâlí (d.505/1111) writes that the inner meaning of many verses and *aḤâdíth* can only be understood through *mukāshafa*, mystical unveiling; *mukāshafa* is closely connected with *ma'rifa*—sometimes being synonymous with it and at other times being a path leading to it as the final goal. See F. Jabre, *La Notion de la Ma'rifa chez Ghazali*, pp. 24-26. Paris, Traditions les Lettres Orientales, 1958.

410 For example, Hujwírí, op.cit., p.267, and Qushayrí (d. 465/1074) in his famous *Risāla*, translated by B.R. von Schlegell as *Principles of Sufism*, p.316. Berkeley, Mizan Press, 1990.

411 *Kitāb al-Luma'*, p.40 (of the Arabic text). Ed. R.A. Nicholson, E.J. Gibb Memorial Series XXII, London, 1963.

412 It would be wrong to say that this process was either uniform or unilateral. The two terms were frequently to be found as synonyms within Sufi texts; sometimes *ma'rifa* would be described as a form of *'ilm*, and vice versa; and there was no unanimity on the question of *ma'rifa* being superior to *'ilm*. See Kalābādhí's (d. 385/995) *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf, li-madhhab ahl al-taṣawwuf*, (translated by A.J. Arberry, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, Cambridge University Press, 1935) chapter XXII, 'Their variance as to the nature of gnosis'. For the use of the two terms as synonyms, see Abú Sa'íd al-Kharrāz (d.286/899), *Kitāb al-Ṣidq*, (*The Book of Truthfulness*, tr. A.J. Arberry, Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 49-50 (p.60 of the Arabic text). Also it should be noted that even the Sufi most frequently cited in connection with the first formal articulation of *ma'rifa*, Dhú'l-Nún al-Miṣrí

(d.245/859), speaks of the *ma'rifa* of the common folk, that of the *'ulamâ'*, and that of the saints. See Faríd al-Dín 'Aṭṭār's *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā'*, Part I, p.127 (Persian text). Ed. R.A. Nicholson, London, Luzac & Co, 1905. Finally, regarding the question of which is superior, *ma'rifa* or *'ilm*, Ibn al-'Arabí writes that the apparent disagreement is only a verbal one: it is the self-same knowledge of the supernal verities that is in question, whether this be called *ma'rifa* or *'ilm*. See See W.C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, Ibn al-<Arabí's Metaphysics of Imagination, p.149. State University of New York, 1989.

413 One can find, prior to this time, scattered references to the term in a specifically Sufi context. For example: Ibrāhím b. Adham (d. 160/777) is said to have developed the notion of *ma'rifa* (M. Smith, *An Early Mystic of Baghdad: A Study of the Life and Teachings of Ṣārith b.Asad al-Muḥāsibí*, p.73. London, Sheldon Press, 1935). The lady Umm al-Dardā', a traditionist of the first century Hijra, was reported as saying, 'The most excellent knowledge (*'ilm*) is the gnosis (*al-ma'rifa*).' Cited in Franz Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant - The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*, p.139. Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1970.

414 'The pre-emption by others of *'ilm* as a technical term prevented the Sufis permanently from selecting *'ilm* for employment as one of the numerous technical terms of their own vocabulary and from using it to designate by it one of their specific states and stations. Since *ma'rifa* and *yaqín* lent themselves without much difficulty to doubling for *'ilm*, they were indeed widely substituted for it.' Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, op. cit., p.165.

415 See V. Danner, 'The Early Development of Sufism', p. 254. In S.H. Nasr (ed.) *Islamic Spirituality*, Vol.I—Foundations, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987.

416 See above, note 6.

417 *Kashf al-Maḥjúb*, op.cit., p.382. Much the same is said by Qushayrí in his *Risāla*, in the chapter entitled *al-Ma'rifatu bi-'llāh*, op.cit., p.316.

418 This is not to say that the *'aql* is always seen in this limitative sense; it can also designate consciousness as such, thus comprising not only both reason and intuition but also both the created intelligence and the uncreated intellect. See S.H. Nasr, 'Intellect and Intuition: Their Relationship from the Islamic Perspective', esp. pp. 68-74. *Studies in Comparative Religion*, Vol.13, nos. 1,2, Winter-Spring 1979. Moreover, there is nothing mutually exclusive about the terms *'aql* and *qalb*, as the Qur'ān asks: *have they hearts (qulúb) wherewith to understand (ya'qilúna bihâ)* . . . (22: 46).

419 This is the title of an article on al-Ṣādiq by John Taylor in *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XL, no.2, 1966. Taylor notes that both Abú Nu'aym al-Iṣfahânî and 'Aṭṭār put al-Ṣādiq at the head of their respective compendia of hagiographies.

420 Ibid., p.109. *Ma'rifa* is found in the later Shí'ite tradition referred to as *'irfān*, which in fact came to stand for esoterism or essential *taṣawwuf* as such. See S.H. Nasr, 'Shí'ism and Sufism: Their Relationship in Essence and History', esp. p.118, in *Sufi Essays*, London, George Allen & Unwin, 1972.

421 Cited in Taylor, op. cit., p.110. It should also be noted that Dhú'l-Nún made an edition of al-Ṣādiq's esoteric commentary on the Qur'an, which was to play a role of great significance in the unfolding both of the esoteric science of hermeneutics and Islamic spirituality generally, given the centrality of the Qur'an therein. '. . . it was al-Ṣādiq who played the most important role in the whole history of esoteric commentaries upon the Qur'ān in both its Shī'ite and Sufi facets.' Abdurrahman Habil, 'Traditional Esoteric Commentaries o the Quran', in *Islamic Spirituality*, op.cit., pp. 29-30.

422 Translated by W.C. Chittick, in *A Shi'ite Anthology*, p.43. London, Muhammadı Trust, 1980.

423 Quoted in C.W. Ernst, *Words of Ecstasy in Sufism*, p.10. Albany, State University of New York Press, 1985. One finds an echo of this formulation in relation to the notion of *ma'rifa* in al-Kharrāz: 'Only God has the right to say "I". For whoever says "I" will not reach the level of gnosis.' Cited in A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, p.55. University of North Carolina Press, 1975. Also, al-Sarrāj, in the chapter on *tawḥíd* in his *Luma'*, op. cit., p.32 (Arabic text) makes the statement that none can say 'I' but God, adding that 'I-ness'(*al-anniyya*) pertains only to God.

424 According to Massignon, Dhú'l-Nún was 'the first to isolate distinctly the notion of *ma'rifa*'. *Essai Sur les Origines du Lexique Technique de la Mystique Musulmane*, p.208. Paris, Libraire Philosophique J. Vrin, 1954. Annemarie Schimmel also points to Dhú'l-Nún as one of the original articulators of *ma'rifa*. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, op. cit., p.6.

425 Quoted in *La Vie Merveilleuse de Dhu'l-Nun l'Egyptien*, p.166. This is the translation by R. Deladrière of Ibn al-'Arabí's biography of Dhú'l-Nún, *al-Kawkab al-durrí fí manāqib Dhí'l-Nún al-Miṣrí*, Paris, Sindbad, 1988.

426 Muhammad 'Abur Rab argues that Abú Yazíd played an instrumental role not only in distinguishing between exoteric and esoteric knowledge, but also in formulating the doctrine of *ma'rifa*, saying that Dhú'l-Nún, his contemporary and friend, in fact learnt about *ma'rifa* from him. See his article, 'Abú Yazíd al-Basṭāmí's Contribution to the Development of Sufism', pp. 58-59, in *Iqbal Review*, vol.12, no.3, 1971. The importance of Abú Yazíd in Sufism can be gauged by the fact that al-Junayd, himself a pivotal figure in the Sufi tradition, referred to him as being, in relation to the Sufis, what Gabriel is in relation to the angels. 'Aṭṭār, op.cit., p.135. We shall consequently be making considerable use of his sayings on *ma'rifa*, in particular those of his Persian sayings in 'Aṭṭār's *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā'*,

427 Quoted in 'Aṭṭār, *Tadhkirat*, op. cit., p.163. (Persian text; this and all subsequent citations are translated by this writer from the Persian.)

428 Ibid., p.164 (Persian text) One is reminded here of al-Ṣādiq's formulation: 'Our cause is the Truth, and the Truth of the Truth (*Ḥaqq al-Ḥaqq*). It is the exoteric (*ẓāhir*) and it is the esoteric of the exoteric (*bāṭin al-ẓāhir*), and it

is the esoteric of the esoteric.' Quoted in Taylor, 'Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, Spiritual Forebear of the Sufis', op. cit., p.103.

429 'Aṭṭār, op. cit., p.165.

430 Ibid.

431 Quoted in Sarrāj, *Luma'*, op. cit., p.36 (Arabic text; our translation). There is another version of this saying of the first Caliph, in Ibn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam*: 'knowledge of the incapacity to attain knowledge is knowledge'. *The Bezels of Wisdom*, p.65. Tr. R.W.J. Austin, New York, Paulist Press, 1980.

432 'Aṭṭār, op. cit., p. 127 (Persian text). One is reminded here of the famous saying by the great saint Rabi'a al-'Adawīyya: 'Thine existence is a sin with which no other can be compared.' Quoted by M.Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*, p.125, n.2. London, George Allen & Unwin, 1971.

433 *The Mawāqif and Makhṭūbāt of Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdu-l-Jabbār al-Niffarī*, No.11/ sections 1 and 6. Tr. R.A. Nicholson, Gibb Memorial Series, IX, London, 1935.

434 Cited in *La Vie Merveilleuse*, op. cit., p.166.

435 Both aspects of this sun-image are found in Dhū'l-Nūn's doctrine. See 'Aṭṭār, op. cit., p.127 (Persian text).

436 It is *ma'rifa* that determines the entire structure of the stations of sanctity described by al-Tirmidhī in the doctrine of sanctity for which he is most renowned. See 'The Life of the Friends of God' especially pp. 40-53. Translated in B. Radtke, J. O'Kane, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islam*, London, Curzon, 1996. Al-Tirmidhī gives a fascinating quasi-physiological account of the process by which *ma'rifa* is realized. According to him, *ma'rifa* is a divine light residing in the heart from pre-eternity. It is realized when its light shines from the heart (*qalb*) through to the breast (*ṣadr*) and is there recognised by the eye of the heart (*fu'ād*) and then the intellect (*'aql*); this takes place only when the lusts of the nafs -conceived as smoke welling up from the abdomen into the heart, thus obscuring the vision of the *fu'ād* - are overcome. See ibid., pp. 46-51.

437 Quoted in N.Heer, 'A Sufi Psychological Treatise', p.31, in *The Muslim World*, Vol.LI, no.1, 1961.

438 Quoted by S. Sviri, 'Ḥakīm Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement in Early Sufism', p.600, in *Classical Persian Sufism—from the origins to Rumi*, ed. L. Lewisohn, London/New York, Khaniqah Nimatullahi Publications, 1993.

439 'Aṭṭār, op.cit., p.165 (Persian text).

440 Smith, *Early Mystic*, op. cit., pp. 98-101.

441 Ibid., p.50. He makes these criticisms in a work entitled 'Treatise on Earning a Livelihood and Abstinence and Doubtful Things'.

442 Translated by V.Danner as *Sufi Aphorisms*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1973. As Danner says, the central theme of the book is *ma'rifa*. It is the 'inner thread' that holds together the 'jewels' that are the separate aphorisms in the book. (p.17)

443 Ibid., p.24, no.8.

444 Ibid., p.32, no.47. The final quotation is from the Qur'ān, 14:20. See also his entire volume devoted to the invocation, *The Key of Salvation*, tr. Mary A.K. Danner, Cambridge, Islamic Texts Society, 1996. Al-Ghazālī refers to the invocation as one of the principal means of 'polishing the heart', rendering it capable of reflecting the verities of *ma'rifa*. See Jabre, *La Notion de la ma'rifa*, op.cit., pp.18 & 124.

445 'Aṭṭār, op. cit., p.168 (Persian text)

446 *What the Seeker Needs*, tr. Shaikh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi, Rabia Terri Harris al-Jerrahi, New York, Threshold Books, 1992, p.8. Al-Ghazālī also stresses that without purity of soul there can be no *ma'rifa*. *Notion*, op. cit., p.128.

447 See *La Vie Merveilleuse*, op. cit., p.162.

448 'Aṭṭār, op. cit., p.127. The verse from the Qur'ān is 35: 28.

449 *Kashf*, op. cit., p.68.

450 Quoted in M.I. el-Geyoushi, 'The Influence of al-Tirmidhī on Sufi Thought', p.105, in *Islamic Quarterly*, Vol.XX-XXII, no.3, 1978. Abū Yazīd likewise relates that one night he sought his own soul, only to hear a divine voice rebuke him in the morning: 'O Bāyazīd, are you seeking something other than Us? What business have you with the soul?' 'Aṭṭār, op. cit., p.161 (Persian text).

451 Ibid., p.170.

452 Ibid., p.162.

453 Quoted in 'The Place of the Religious Commandments in the Philosophy of al-Ghazālī', Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, p.176, in *The Muslim World*, Vol.LI, no.3, 1961.

454 This is a logical corollary of the *Ḥadīth qudsī* on God as the 'hidden treasure': for if God 'loved' to be known, the process of coming to know Him must likewise be accompanied by Divine love.

455 Smith, *Early Mystic*, op. cit., pp. 230-232.

456 *La Vie Merveilleuse*, op. cit., pp.165, 167.

457 *The Way of Abū Madyan*, p.138 no.113. Edited and translated by V.J. Cornell, Cambridge, Islamic Texts Society, 1996.

458 'Ecstasy is akin to passing away (*zawāl*), while gnosis is stable and does not pass away', an opinion recorded by al-Kalābādhī, who then goes on to quote this verse from al-Junayd:

In ecstasy delighteth he
        Who finds in it his rest:
But when Truth cometh, ecstasy
        Itself is dispossessed.

Doctrine of the Sufis, op. cit. p.106.

459 *Sufi Aphorisms*, op. cit., pp. 61-62.

460 *The Way of Abū Madyan*, op. cit., p.146, no.159.

461 *Sufi Aphorisms*, op. cit., p.49, no.179. For Ibn al-'Arabí, the greatest *karāma* is knowledge itself. See Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, op. cit., p.148.

462 Quoted in M. Smith, *Rabia the Mystic*, op. cit., p.31.

463 Quoted in *Mystics of Islam*, op. cit., p.131.

464 Ibn al-'Arabí speaks of two forms of *ma'rifa*: 'first, knowing Him as knowing yourself'—this refers to the *Ḥadíth* cited above, *whoso knows himself knows his Lord*—'second, knowing Him through you as Him, not as you'. *Bezels*, op. cit., p.108.

465 Quoted in *Sufi Path*, op. cit., p.375.

466 Quoted in M. Smith, *Readings*, op. cit., no.20, pp. 23-24.

467 *Forty Ḥadíth Qudsí*, p.104, no.25. Selected and translated by E. Ibrahim and D. Johnson-Davies, Beirut/Damascus, Dar al-Koran al-Kareem, 1980.

468 *Kitāb al-Fanā' fí'l-Mushāhada*, translated by M. Valsan, *Le Livre de l'Extinction dans la Contemplation*, pp. 27-28. Paris, Les Éditions de l'Oeuvre, 1984.

469 See *The Spiritual Writings of Amir 'Abd al-Kader*, no. 23, p.106. This is the English translation by J.Chrestensen *et al*, of M. Chodkiewicz's French translation of extracts from the *Mawāqif*. State University of New York Press, 1995.

470 *Forty Ḥadíth*, op.cit., no.18, p.88.

471 *Spiritual Writings*, op. cit., p.106.

472 *Al-Ghazzālí's Mishkāt al-Anwār* ('The Niche for Lights') p.59. Tr. W.H.T. Gairdner, New Delhi, Kitab Bhavan, 1988.

473 The notion that *ma'rifa* has degrees is expressed by al-Ghazālí as follows: '. . . to whatever extent the heart is cleansed and made to face the truth, to that extent will it reflect His reality.' *The Book of Knowledge*, p. 49. Tr. N.A. Faris, Lahore, Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1966. Also significant is what Niffarí says: 'Everything that concentrates thee on gnosis belongs to gnosis.', *Mawāqif*, op. cit., 9:6, p. 38.

474 Recalling the words of Ibn al-'Arabí cited above: the *'ārifún* can only impart their states to those who have *begun* to experience the like.

475 In a discussion of *fanā'* and *baqā'* in the *Mathnawí*, Rúmí expresses well the mysterious incommensurability between the verbal expression and the intrinsic reality of *fanā'* by referring to the simple sentence: Zayd died (*māta Zayd*): '. . . if Zayd is the agent (grammatical subject) (*fā'il*) (yet) he is not the agent, for he is defunct (*<āṭil*). He is the agent (only) in respect of the grammatical expression; otherwise he is the acted upon (*maf'úl*), and Death is his slayer.' Book III, 3683-4, in R.A. Nicholson's translation, Vol.IV. London, Luzac, 1930.

476 He answers the question: why are these *ma'ārif* revealed through *mukāshafa* only in a state of *fanā'*? by saying that the operation of the individual faculties act as obstacles to this mode of inspired disclosure, being tied to the sensible world which is 'a world of error and illusion'. See no.56 of his treatise *al-Arba'ín*, quoted in Jabre, *Notion*, op. cit., p.124.

477 *Iḥyā'*, II, 257; quoted in ibid. p.65.

478 *Mishkāt*, op. cit., pp. 60,61.

479 Ibid., p.61. We have not followed Gairdner's translation of these two terms as 'identity' and 'unification', respectively.

480 See the translation by von Schlegell, op.cit.

481 Quoted in M.A. Rabb, 'Abú Yazíd al-Basṭāmí's Contribution', op. cit., p.56. This point is made with great force and beauty in a story in Rumi's *Mathnawí* about Abú Yazíd: he tells his disciples to kill him if he utters again any blasphemous claims about being one with God; he again succumbs to the unitive state, and utters his famous words, but when they try and kill him, they only succeed in stabbing themselves, as 'he' is no longer there. 4:2102-2140, in Nicholson, op. cit.

482 Quoted in M. Lings, *A Sufi Saint*, op. cit., p.163.

483 Quoted in R. Deladrière, *La Vie Merveilleuse*, op. cit., p.166.

484 We are applying here a well-known definition of Sufism: to be in the world but not of it.

485 *Bezels*, op. cit., p.50.

486 Ibn al-'Arabí writes elsewhere of the vision of the Real in terms of light: 'The object of vision, which is the Real, is light, while that through which the perceiver perceives Him is light. Hence light becomes included within light. *It is as if it returns to the root from which it became manifest.* So nothing sees Him but He. You, in respect of your entity are identical with shadow, not light.' (Emphasis added) Quoted in Chittick, *Sufi Path*, op. cit., p.215.

487 Hence the sentence frequently cited in Sufi literature: the Sufi is uncreated (*al-Ṣúfí lam yukhlaq*).

488 These ideas are developed further, in comparative context, in the present author's forthcoming publication, *Paths to Transcendence: An Analysis of Transcendent Realization in Shankara, Ibn Arabi and Meister Eckhart* (State University of New York Press). See especially Ch.V, Part II, Section VI, 'Agency in Transcendent Realization'.

489 Chittick, *Sufi Path*, op. cit., p.321.

490 Quoted in ibid., p.321.

491 Quoted in ibid., p.185.

492 Quoted in ibid., p.365

493 Ibn al-'Arabí distinguishes between those 'sent back'(*mardúdún*) and those 'absorbed' or effaced (*mustahlikún*); the former are deemed 'more perfect' and are in turn sub-divided into those who return only to themselves, and those who return with the mandate to guide others to the Truth, these being the higher of the two. See *Journey to the Lord of Power*, R.T. Harris, p.51, New York, Inner Traditions International, 1981.

494 Quoted in J.W. Morris 'Ibn al-'Arabí's Spiritual Ascension', p.374, in Chodkiewicz, *Illuminations*, op. cit.

495 *The Tarji'-Band of Hatif*, p.26 tr. E.G. Browne, Tehran, Farhang-Sara, 1367 (Solar/Hijri).

496 —Ackerman, R, *Theories of Knowledge*, London: McGrow Hill, 1965, P.3.

497 Al-Subki,*Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah al-kubrā*, Cairo: al-Qādir al-ḥusnā Publishers, 1903, Vol. 4, p. 107.

498 Watt, W. M., *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962, p. 117.

499 Watt, W. M., *Islamic Philosophy and Theology*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962, p. 117.

500 al-Ghazzali, M., *op. cit.* pp. 47-49.

501 Al-Subki, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyyah al-kubrā*, Cairo: al-Qādir al-ḥusnā Publishers, 1903, Vol. 4, p. 107.

502 Badawi, 'Abdurahman, *Mu'allfāt al-Ghazzālī*, Cairo, 1961, p. 505.

503 Ibn al-'Arabi, Abu Bakr, *Al-Qawāṣim min al-'awāṣim*, Cairo: Makhẓūẓāt al-qāhirah, No. 492, p. 343.

504 Rosenthal, F., *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*, Netherlands: Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1970, p. 50.

505 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

506 Al-Zubaydi, M., *Tāj al-'arūs min jawāhir al-qāmūs*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1994, pp. 495-496.

507 Al-Ghazzali, M., *Al-Mustasfā*, Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 16.

508 Rosenthal, F., *op. cit.*, p. 63.

509 Windelband, W., *A History of Philosophy: The Formation and Development of its Problems and Concepts*, London: Macmillan & Co., 1914, pp. 219-220.

510 *Ibid.*, p. 223.

511 Wali Allah al-Dehlawi, S., *Al-Inṣāf fī bayān asbāb al-ikhtilāf*, Beirut: Dār al-Nafais, n.d, p. 68.

512 Wali Allah al-Dehlawi, S., *Ḥujjatullāh al-bālighah*, Lahore: Matba' al-Salafiyyah, n.d, Vol. 1, p. 153.

513 *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 154-155.

514 Ibn Khaldun, A, *Al-Muqaddimah*, Beirut: Dår al-Fikr, 1988, Vol. 1, p. 448.

515 The Hanafi scholar, Imam al-Tahawi, was quoted by Ibn 'Ābidīn in *Rasm al-muftī* Vol. 1, p. 32, from his *Majmū'āt al-rasā'il*, and also by Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani in his biography in *al-Lisān* as saying, "None will blindly follow except an ignorant person or a bigoted partisan."

According to the Ḥanafī books, it is not permissible for an ignorant person to attain the post of a judge. While commenting on this statement, Ibn Hammām, the Ḥanafī jurist, wrote in his *Sharḥ fatḥ al-qadīr* that the ignorant here was referring to a blind follower (*Muqallid*). See, Ibn Hammām, M., *Sharḥ fatḥ al-qadīr*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d., Vol. 5, p. 456.

In the same way al-Suyuti wrote in his explanatory notes to *Sunan Ibn Mājah* Vol. 1, p. 70, that "the *Muqallid* is not regarded as a scholar".

According to Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, in his *Nuniyyah*, "knowledge is a realization of the guidance with its proof; that and blind-following are not equal."

Imām al-Shāṭibi writes in his *al-Muwāfaqāt* that "the *Muqallid* in not a scholar". See, al- Shāẓibī, *al-Muwāfaqāt*, Riyadh: Maktabah al-Riyad al-ḥadīthah, n.d., Vol. 4, p. 293.

Hafiz Ibn 'Abd al-Barr reports in his *al-Jāmi'* (Vol. 2, p. 119), that there is consensus among Muslim scholars that "whatever is not clear and certain is not knowledge . . .and there is no disagreement among the different scholars regarding the error of *taqlīd* . . . "

516 Al-Ghazzālī, M, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Makkah: al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyyah, n.d, Vol. 1, p. 93.

517 *Ibid.*, p. 94.

518 Al-Ghazzālī, M., *al-Munqiḍ*, Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Sha'abiyyah, n.d, pp. 24-26.

519 *Ibid.*, p. 27.

520 See, Sūra al-Naḥl, 75: "God brought you from your mother's wombs with your knowing nothing; gave you ears, eyes and hearts so that you may be grateful."

521 Hammond, R., *The Philosophy of al-Farabi and its Influence on Medieval Thought*, New York, 1947, p. 149; Al-Farabi, *Political Regime*, pp. 47-51.

522 Hammond, R., *Al-Farabi's the Gems of Wisdom*, p. 39.

523 Osmon-Craver, *Philosophical Foundations of Education*, New York, 1971, (p. 46)

524 Hammond, R., *op. cit.*, p. 38.

525 *Ibid*, p. 39.

526 Al-Ghazzālī, M., *Al-MunqiṬ*, Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Sha'abiyyah, n.d, pp. 78-79.

527 Al-Ghazzālī, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Makkah: al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyyah, n.d, Vol. 4, pp. 435-447.

528 Calkins, M. W., *Locke's Essays Concerning Human Understanding*. New York, pp. 25-26.

529 Al-Ghazzali, *ḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Makkah: al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyyah, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 75-76.

530 *Al-Najm*, Verse 11.

531 *Al-An'ām*, Verse 75.

532 *Al-Ḥāj*, Verse 46.

533 Al-Ghazzali, M., *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Makkah: al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyyah, Vol. 1, p. 104.

534 Al-Ghazzali, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-30.

535 Al-Ghazzali, M, *al-MunqiṬ*, p. 30.

536 *Ibid.*

537 Zaid al-Zunaidi, A. R., *Maṣādir al-ma'rifah fi al-fikr al-dīn wa falsafa*, Washington: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1992, p. 237. See also:

Conze, E, *Buddhist Scriptures*, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1959, p. 247.
538 Windelband, W, *op. cit.*, p. 227.
539 *Ibid.*
540 It was this doctrine which influenced the heretic Ibn 'Arabi and later other Sufis in the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of the phenomenal world).
541 Windelband, W., *op. cit.*, p. 227.
542 *Ibid.*, p. 228.
543 *Ibid.*, p. 229.
544 Al-Ghazzālī, M, *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*, Makkah: al-Maktabah al-Faiṣaliyyah, n.d, Vol. 1, p. 97.
545 Fatemi, N., *Sufism*, Karachi: Pub. Unknown, n.d., p. 49
546 Ibn Arabi, *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom*, Trans. by Sheik Tosun al-Halveti, *Fons Vitae*, Louisville, KY, U.S.A., 1997, p. 23
547 *Ibid*, p. 24
548 For a broad and deep analysis of Ibn Arabi's micro/macrocosm ontology, see William Chittick's *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, SUNY, NY, NY, 1989
549 McGreal, Ian (Editor), *Great Thinkers of the Eastern World*, Michael A. Sells essay on "Ibn 'Arabi", Harper Collins, NY, NY, 1995
550 Ibn Arabi, *Divine Governance*, p. 27
551 Chittick, William, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, State University of New York Press, 1989
552 Ibn Arabi, *Divine Governance*, p. 41
553 *Ibid*, p. 41-42
554 *Ibid*, p. 43
555 *Ibid*, p. 44
556 *Ibid*
557 *Ibid*, p. 45
558 (See William Chittick's *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*)
559 *Ibid*, p. 46
560 When addressing that awesome moment in human development, Ibn Arabi consistently couches it in symbolic terms and poetic insights, rather than in literal (usually deductive) language. Since such language is usually the only common standard of philosophical discourse in the West, a large gap exists between the East and West in their approach to notions of revelation and intuitive knowledge.
561 *Ibid*, p. 46-47
562 *Ibid*, p. 51
563 *Ibid*, p. 38.
564 *Ibid*, p. 51
565 *Ibid*, p. 52
566 *Ibid*, p.55
567 *Ibid*, p.56

568 *Ibid,* p. 61

569 Black, Anthony, *History of Islamic Political Thought,* Routledge, NY, NY, 2001

570 Ibn Arabi, *Divine Governance,* p. 63

571 *Ibid,* p. 63

572 *Ibid,* p. 63

573 *Ibid,* p. 67

574 *Ibid,* p. 71

575 *Ibid,* p. 75

576 *Ibid,* p. 104

577 *Ibid,* p. 105

578 *Ibid,* p. 109

579 *Ibid,* p.37-40

580 *Ibid,* p. 40

581 Ibn Arabi, *Al-Futuhat Al-Makkiya,* ed. M. Chodkiewicz, trans. William Chittick and James Morris, *The Meccan Revelations Vol. 1,* PIR Press, New York, New York, 2002, pgs. 171-172. This work, the first of two volumes, is a central and essential item to the study of Ibn Arabi in the west.

582 Sells, Michael, "Ibn Arabi," *Great Thinkers of the Eastern World,* ed. Ian P McGreal, HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1995 pgs.475-479. This brief and comprehensive essay, included in an anthology introducing great philosophers of the eastern world, is a wonderful compendium of Ibn Arabi's thought. The terms "binding" and "fixed image" are employed by Sells.

583 *Ibid,* See also Ibn Arabi, *At-Tadbirat al-iliahiyyah fi islah al-mamlakat al-insaniyyah,* transl. Shaykh Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti, *Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom,* Fons Vitae, Lousiville, KY, 1997. This little known work is an exposition of Ibn Arabi's psychology; rooting human knowledge in the heart and mystical experience.

584 What Sheik Ibn Arabi expresses in his theological and philosophical project is that Islamic "theology" is a comprehensive account of reality, whereas other theologies attempt to account for the God-man relationship.

585 By "theology" I mean, as stated in endnote four, the speculation and analysis of the tenants of a religion through the text, context, or events by which those tenants aim to demonstrate the God-*man* relation.

586 Chittick, William, "Ibn Arabi," *History of Islamic Philosophy Vol. 1,* eds. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman, Arayeh Cultural Institute, Tehran, Iran, pgs. 499-500. This brief essay, included in a comprehensive two volume encyclopedia of Islamic philosophy, touches upon Ibn Arabi's place in Islamic philosophical history.

587 Ibn Arabi, *Al-Futuhat Al-Makkiya,* pgs. 157-161

588 *Ibid*

589 Iqbal, Muhammad, *Reconstructing Religious Thought in Islam*

590 Ibn Arabi, *Kitab al-ahadiyaa*, trans. Sheik Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halveti, *A Treatise on the One Alone*, Fons Vitae, Lousiville, KY, 1997.

591 *Ibid*, pgs. 234-235.

592 Ibn Rushd in his *Tahafut al-Tahafut* cites this phenomenon in his defense of causality against Al-Ghazali.

593 See Qur'an (Baqara, 2)

594 Iqbal, Muhammad, *Reconstructing Religious Thought in Islam*

595 Chittick, William, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, pg. 35, This position is actually much closer to the position of the Mutazalia.'

596 Chapter 178 was translated to the French by Maurice Gloton (1986).

597 "Proofs for God's Existence and Unity in Greek and Islamic Philosophical Traditions: With an Emphasis on Ibn al-'Arabī's Conception of the Limit and its Role in Proving God's Existence and Unity," *Journal of Transcendent Philosophy*, vol. 2, no.1, March 2001, 29-51; "Plato and Ibn al-'Arabī on Skepticism," *Journal of Muyiddīn Ibn 'Arabī Society*. Vol. XXX, 2001, 19-34.

598 As Dimitri Gutas points out, Plato's *Symposium* was very little known in the medieval Arabic world and that no direct and full translation to Arabic was ever made of the Greek text. Dimitri Gutas, "Plato's Symposion in the Arabic Tradition," in *Greek Philosophers in the Arabic Tradition* (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2000), 36.

599 Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (eds.), *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 526. Hamilton and Huntington consider the *Symposium* and the *Republic* as Plato's two greatest dialogues. Ibid.

600 Chronologically, the *Symposium* belongs to a middle category among Plato's dialogues, coming right before the *Republic* or perhaps after the first part of the *Republic*. See Leonard Brandwood, "Stylometry and Chronology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, ed. Richard Kraut (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 109-111.

601 See, for example, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, *Apology* 21d.

602 *The Collected Dialogues*, *Symposium* 177 d.

603 Ibid., 201 c.

604 Later on I elaborate on what I mean by "rational" in the context of the discussion of the present chapter.

605 Ibid., 213, c.

606 Ibid., 216 e: 6.

607 In his speech, which comes last in the *Symposium*, Alcibiades says: "But on the other hand, when there was plenty to eat he was the one man who really seemed to enjoy it, and though he didn't drink for choice, if we ever pressed him to he'd beat the lot of us. And, what's the most extraordinary thing of all, there's not a man living that's ever seen Socrates drunk." Ibid., 220a: 3-8.

608 Alcibiades says that he exhausted all tricks to bring Socrates to bed of love, until in the end he tempted him into the night by philosophical conversation to find him in the end only laughing at his youthful beauty. Ibid., 219c.

609 In *Charmides* (155d), Plato presents a Socrates having an erection while glancing down into a boy's cloak. Allan Bloom comments that Socrates who was a married man with children would seem to have the morals of a bohemian. Bloom explains, however, that Plato's aim in the *Symposium* is to show us how these 'perverse' details are related to the ascent from the bodily sexual attractions of individuals to the spiritual peaks. Allan Bloom, "The Ladder of Love," in *Plato's Symposium* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 57.

610 It is worth noting that a fragment of the *Symposium* which deals with Alcibiades' visit to Socrates and the latter's refusal to engage in sexual relationship with him is preserved in the Arabic (fragmentary) translation of the *Symposium*. A portion of the relevant fragment reads: "I loved philosophy and I used to go frequently to Sokrates. While teaching others, however, he kept looking at me, and so it occurred to me that he might want from me what people want from fresh-faced [*al-ghulām al-wadī' al-wajh*] young boys". Dimitri Gutas, "Plato's Symposion in the Arabic Tradition," 39.

611 For example, he says: "love does not occupy the whole of the lover unless his beloved is the Real or one of the Real's kind like a slave girl or a slave boy." Mui al-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī, *al- Futūāt al-Makkiyya,* 4 vols (Cairo, 1911), II 325: 25-26.

612 For example, Ibn al-'Arabī says: "When the two lovers embrace each other and suck each other's saliva and when that saliva is dissolved inside each one of the lovers as each breathes from the two [originated] forms at the time of embracing and kissing, then the breath of each one of them enters the inside of the other. The spiritual animal in the natural forms is nothing but that breath." *Futūāt* II 334: 10-13.

613 It was a common charge against *Sufis* that they made illicit use of their ideological convictions as cover for their blamed conduct.

614 William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 147.

615 Following a chapter on knowledge, entitled "On Knowing the Station of Knowledge". Ibn al-'Arabī' provides another discussion of the subject of love in chapter 173 of the *Futūāt*.

616 That is, not known to our *rational* knowledge, knowledge that is based on rational consideration and not on revelation. See the following note.

617 Ibn al-'Arabī distinguishes between the method of tasting (*dhawq*) and the rational method of acquiring knowledge. The main difference between the two methods is that the method of tasting provides a direct way of acquiring knowledge in contrast to the rational method

which relies on proofs and demonstrations. Because of its directedness the method of tasting prevents error and creates harmony between the 'tasters' in comparison with the inevitable disagreements and contradictions in the part of the rational thinkers. *Futūāt* III 81.

618 The Present (ādir) is the essence of Time (*zamān*). Time is a nonexistent relation. The Present is the Instant (*al-ān*) that separates between past time, which is a realized (*muaqqaq*) nonexistence, and future time, which is unrealized nonexistence. *Futūāt*, II 69: 13-14.

619 See William Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al-'Arabi's Cosmology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 437.

620 Most of these descriptions emphasize the instability and the constant variegation of the lover which are due to his reliance on the determinations of his heart, as "heart" in Arabic (*qalb*) means "fluctuation, overturning", in contrast to his descriptions of the rational thinker in terms of stability and fixity which are due to his reliance on his reason, as "reason" in Arabic (*'aql*) means "binding, tying". See note 39.

621 *The Collected Dialogues*, *Letter VII*, 344b.

622 In his famous hexameter poem, Parmenides specifies the only two possible ways of inquiry, as the first way is about that which is and the second is about that which is not. Parmenides states that only the first way of inquiry yields knowledge, as the second way remains indiscernible "for you could not know what is not--that cannot be done—nor indicate it." See G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 245.

623 Daniel Garber, "Rationalism," in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Robert Audi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 673.

624 *The Collected Dialogues, Symposium,* 200 c, d, e: 1-2.

625 Futūāt II 327: 5-9.

626 *The Self-Disclosure of God*, 21-22. *Futūāt* II 327: 9-13.

627 Ibn al-'Arabī also makes a reference to a woman who possessed, according to him, divine powers:

> I served a woman from among the Gnostic lovers in Seville called Fātimah bint Ibn al-Muthanā al-Qurtubī. I served her for years. At the time of my service to her she was more than ninety-five years old. I blushed when I looked at her face even at her old age because of the redness of her cheeks and the perfection of her grace and beauty. You would think that she was fourteen years old due to her softness and gracefulness. She held a state with God. She preferred me to all those who served her. She said: 'I have never seen like so-and-so. When he enters to me he enters with his entirety leaving nothing of it behind, and when he leaves he leaves with his entirety, leaving behind nothing of it with me.' *Futūāt*, 347: 16-20.

628 In *Meno*, Socrates introduces the following dilemma:

Meno: But how will you look for something when you don't in the least know what it is? How on earth are you going to set up something you don't know as the object of your search? To put it another way, even if you come right up against it, how will you know that what you have found is the thing you didn't know?

Socrates: I know what you mean. Do you realize that what you are bringing up is the trick argument that a man cannot try to discover either what he knows or what he does not know? He would not seek what he knows, for since he knows it there is no need of the inquiry, nor what he does not know, for in that case he does not even know what he is to look for. *The Collected Dialogues*, *Meno*, 80: d-e.

629 The Collected Dialogues, Symposium, 202 b: 2-5.

630 Ibid., 203 c: 5-7, d.

631 In *Futūāt* II 327: 14-17 Ibn al-'Arabī says:

One of the attributes of Love is that the lover brings the opposites together, so that through the capacity of choice he may become in the image of God. In this lies the difference between the natural and the spiritual kinds of Love. Only man brings them together, while animals love but do not bring together the opposites. Man is capable of bringing the opposites together because he is in the image of God who described Himself by the opposites in His saying: "He is the First and the Last/ the Manifest and the Hidden." [Qur'ān 57: 3]

632 Ibid., 327: 17-20.

633 Ibn al-'Arabī says:

Love is described by straying from the way and by bewilderment. Bewilderment negates reason. Reason is what holds you together whereas bewilderment divides you and disunites you. That is why Love is described by dispersion, since it disperses the lover's concerns in many directions. Ibid., II 338: 3-4.

634 The Collected Dialogues, Symposium, 202 e: 5-18.

635 Ibid., 210, 211.

636 Ibid., 211 a 5-8, b: 1-4.

637 Ibid., 211 c: 3-8.

638 Futūāt II 331: 9-21.

639 The *barzakh* is Ibn al-'Arabī's notion of the Limit. It is a paradoxical notion in the sense that the *barzakh* is a liminal entity that differentiates between things and, at the same time, provides for their unity. Ibn al-'Arabī provides an elaborated account of the notion of the *barzakh* in chapter 382 of the *Futūāt*. See chapter on the *barzakh* in Chittick's *The Self-Disclosure of God* (Chapter 10 entitled "The Imaginal *Barzakh*"). See also Andrey Smirnov's comparison between two notions of the Limit in his "Nicholas of Cusa and Ibn Arabi: Two Philosophies of Mysticism," *Philosophy East and West* 43, no. 1, January 1993: 65-85.

640

641 *Futūhāt* II 332: 3-8.

642 Thus, the very search for objectivity requires a serious reconsideration of the role of the subject. This requirement is often overlooked in the academics of our times as Elizabeth Roberts points out:

According to the academic *mores* of our time, true knowledge, that is, knowledge of the realities of things as they are, is often equated with objective knowledge, meaning knowledge unbiased and uncoloured by the personal prejudices of the subject, and even independent of the subject. But, in truth, there is not objective judgment that exists independently of its subject. Elizabeth Roberts, "Love and Knowledge," *Journal of the Muyiddīn Ibn 'Arabī Society*, Vol. VII, 1988, 71.

643 *Futūāt* II 332: 7-8.

644 *The Collected Dialogues*, *Symposium*, 210 c.

645 In "On Plato's Symposium," Seth Benardete writes:

Through Diotima Socrates sets out to prove that Eros is not a god and no religion can fonn around him. Socrates thus answers Phaedrus's original question, which prompted this famous night of speeches, why no poet ever praised Eros, Eros is not a god, Socrates is not his prophet, and Plato not the poet for whom Phaedrus is waiting. Seth Benardete, "On Plato's Symposium," in *Plato's Symposium*, trans. Seth Benardete with commentaries by Allan Bloom and Seth Benardete (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 181.

Donald Levy, "The Definition of Love in Plato's Symposium," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 1, no. 1, January-March 1979, 286.

646 Donald Levy, "The Definition of Love in Plato's Symposium," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 1, no. 1, January-March 1979, 286.

647 Ibid., 288.

648 Henry Corbin provided one of the most serious studies of Ibn al-'Arabī's theory of Creative Imagination in *Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn 'Arabi*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

649 *Futūāt* I 304: 22-32.

650 I elaborated on the difference between the position of Ibn al-'Arabī' and that of the skeptics in "Plato and Ibn al-'Arabi on Skepticism," *Journal of the Muyiddīn Ibn 'Arabi Society*. Vol. XXX, 2001, 26-34.

651 For details about the love story of Qays and Laylā in the Arabic and other literatures see J. A. Haywood, "Majnūn Laylā," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986, Vol. V, 1102-1107. It is worth noting that we can learn a very similar lesson to the one stated in the present discussion from Ibn al-'Arabī's account of his own love to Nizām. See discussion by Ralph Austin, "The Lady Nizām—An Image of Love and Knowledge," *Journal of the Muyiddīn Ibn 'Arabī Society*, Vol. VII, 1988, 42-44. For more on the relationship between love and Creative Imagination see Henry Corbin, *Creative*

Imagination, 136-175.

652 *Futūat* II 325: 5-8.

653 *Futūāt* 337: 22-27.

654 In a sense Laylā's behavior can be described in similar terms. Her passive reaction her father's refusal to wed her to the person she was madly in love with, her passive acceptance of a certain Ward as husband and her passive refusal to consume the marriage with him all can be considered paradoxical elements.

655 By rational is meant here a normative concept that is characterized in such a way that "for any action, belief, or desire, if it is rational we ought to choose it." See *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 674.

656 *The word for imagination in Arabic is "khayāl"*. Renate Jacobe points out that the *khayāl* is explained by medieval Arabic commentators and modern scholars as a vision that the person sees in a dream. Jacobe points at an early signification of the term that preserves its original meaning. The *khayāl* signifies a real entity (a woman) that appeared to the poet at "the time of the night when darkness is beginning to fade and dusk is setting in" and that inspired him to create his poetry. Renate Jacobe, "The *Khayāl* Motif in Early Arabic Poetry," *Oriens*, Vol. 32, 1990, 52, 54.

657 On this issue see the author's 'The existential relevance of religious thought in modern social philosophy' in *SUFI Illuminations*, Vol. 3 No. 1 Spring 2002, 34-43.

658 Elizabeth Sirriyeh: *Sufis and anti-Sufis :the defence, rethinking and rejection of Sufism in the modern world*, Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1999.

659 James Kirkup: *Zen contemplations* /James Kirkup. [1st ed.]. . .Osaka: Union Services, 1978.

660 Nishida Kitaro, *Intelligibility and the Philosophy of Nothingness. Three Philosophical* Essays. Translated and introduced by Robert Schinzinger in collaboration with I. Koyama and T. Kojima; The International Philosophical Research Association of Japan. Greenwood Press, Publishers. Westport, Connecticut.

661 Kolak, Daniel: *Self and identity: contemporary philosophical issues* /Daniel Kolak, Raymond Martin. New York: Macmillan; Toronto: Collier Macmillan, 1991

662 Seyyed Ahmad Rahnemaei, *The Concept of Self-Realisation in the Educational Philosophies of John Dewey and Allama Tabatabai*, Ph. D. Thesis at McGill University, Canada, 1999.

663 Frederick Copleston, *Fichte to Nietzsche*, in A History of Philosophy, Vol VII, ed. Edmund Sutcliffe, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1965, pp298.

664 *Ibid.* pp297.

665 *Ibid.* pp298

666 Wei Wu Wei, *The Tenth Man*, Hong Kong University Press, 1966.

667 Ursula King, *Christian Mystics: Their Lives and Legacies throughout the*

Ages (London: Routledge, 2004), 5; Abū al-Wafā' al-Taftāzānī, *Madkhal ilā al-Taṣawwuf al-Islāmī* (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1979), 35.

668 E. G. Browne, *A Year in among the Persians* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 3d ed., 1950), 136.

669 Josef Masson, *The Noble Path of Buddhism* (Walton Hall: The Open University Press, 1987), 7.

670 Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 1-2.

671 Jacques De Marquette, *Introduction to Comparative Mysticism* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), 62-63, 81; William Johuston, *The Still Point: Reflection on Zen and Christian Mysticism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1970), 121.

672 Marquette, *Introduction to Comparative Mysticism*, 63; Sir M. Monier-William, *Buddhism in Its Connexion with Brāhmanism and Hinduism and in Its Contrast with Christianity* (Varanasi, India: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1964), 125.

673 Peter Harvey (ed.), *Buddhism* (London: Continuum, 2001), 5-25; "Buddhism, Schools of: An Overview," *Encyclopaedia of Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1995), 2:440; E. M. Abrahams, *A Comparative Survey of Hindu, Christian and Jewish Mysticism* (Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1995), 48.

674 "Buddhist Meditation," retrieved January 13, 2007, from *http://www.religionfacts.com/buddhism/practices/meditation.htm*

675 "Buddhist Meditation," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago: *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1998), 2: 603-604.

676 "Buddhism," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15:291; "Tibetan Buddhism (II)", retrieved January 13, 2007, from *http://www.buddhistdoor.com/OldWeb/bdoor/archive/nutshell/teach99.htm.*

677 Ibid.; Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism*, 70.

678 Abrahams, *A Comparative Survey of Hindu, Christian and Jewish Mysticism*, 46.

679 Harvey, *Buddhism*, 97; "Nirvāna," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 8:722.

680 "Mysticism," *Encyclopaedia of Religion*, 10:259.

681 Ibid.

682 Abrahams, *A Comparative Survey of Hindu, Christian and Jewish Mysticism*, 51.

683 Ibid.; "Harvey, *Buddhism*, 106.

684 Monier-William, *Buddhism*, 139-142.

685 For more on the New Testament basis of mysticism, see: Louis William Countryman, *Mystical Way in the Fourth Gospel: Crossing Over into God* (Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1994); Goffrey Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World's Religions* (London: Sheldon Press, 1976), 142; Margaret Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1973), 47.

686 "Aspects of the Christian Religion," retrieved December 13, 2006, from *http://www.cyberspacei.com/jesusi/inlight/religion/christianity/christianity/3_2.htm.*

687 See King, *Christian Mystics*, 11-22; Abrahams, *A Comparative Survey of Hindu, Christian and Jewish Mysticism*, 128-132.

688 Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World's Religions*, 10; Paul Rorem, "The Uplifting Spirituality of Pseudo-Dionysius," in *Christian Spirituality: Origins to the Twelve Century*, ed. Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorff (London: Routledge, 1986), 139, 143.

689 Ibid.

690 King, *Christian Mystics*, 56.

691 Ibid., 20.

692 "Christianity," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 16:332.

693 John of the Cross, *A Spiritual Canticle of the Soul and the Bridegroom Christ*, trans. David Lewis (Electronic Edition) Retrieved December 13, 2006, from *http://www.ccel.org/ccel/john_cross/canticle.txt*; King, *Christian Mystics*, 155-157.

694 "Christianity, Protestant Christianity" Britannica, 16:333; William Ernest Hocking, "The Mystical Spirit and Protestantism," in *Understanding Mysticism*, ed. Richard Woods (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1980), 198-199.

695 Margaret Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East* (Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1973), 6.

696 "Christianity," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 16:333.

697 Ibid., 16:331.

698 Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East*, 18.

699 Quoted in Cora Anne Desmond, *A Study in Comparative Mysticism: Spiritual Darkness in John of the Cross and Sufism* (Honston, Texas: Rise University 1980), 33-34, quoting from John of the Cross, *the Dark Night of the Soul* and *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*.

700 Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East*, 7.

701 Desmond, *A Study in Comparative Mysticism*, 38.

702 Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East*, 8.

703 John of the Cross, *A Spiritual Canticle of the Soul and the Bridegroom Christ*.

704 Ibid.

705 Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj, *The Kitāb al-Luma' fī al-Taṣawwuf*, trans. Reynold A. Nicholson,. (London : Luzac, 1963), 9.

706 Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. Franz Rosenthal (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 3:76.

707 Al-Sarrāj, *The Kitāb al-Luma'*, 27-30.

708 'Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī, *Tārīkh al-Taṣawwuf al-Islāmī* (Kuwait: Wikālat al-Maṭbū'āt, 1975), 44-62; Abd 'Allāh Muṣṭafā Nūmsūk, *al-Būdhiyyah: Tārīkhuhā, wa-'Aqā'iduhā wa-'Alāqat al-Ṣūfiyyah bi-hā* (Riyadh: Aḍwā' al-Salaf, 1999), 396-401.

709 On the difference between Sufi and philosophical approaches, see Badawī, *Tārīkh al-Taṣawwuf al-Islāmī*, 63-82; William C. Chittick, "Mysticism

versus Philosophy in Earlier Islamic History: The al-Tūsī, al-Qūnawī Correspondence," *Religious Studies*, 17 (1981): 87-104.

710 Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi "Shī'ī Mysticism and Sufism," *The Maghreb Review*, 13(1-2) (1988): 97-99.

711 Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, 3:80; A. J. Arberry, *Suffism: An Account of the Mystics of Islam* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950), 83.

712 Abū al-Qāsim al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālah al-Kushayriyyah*, ed. Khalīl al-Manṣūr (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2001), 91.

713 Al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma' fi al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. Reynold A. Nicholson (London: Brill, 1914), 44-46; Al-Sarrāj, *The Kitāb al-Luma'*, 13-14.

714 Ibid., 12-20; Abū al-*Ḥ*asan al-*Ḥ*ujwīrī, *Kashf al-Maḥjūb* (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1974), 217; Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East*, 164-174.

715 Al-Qushayrī, *Al-Risālah al-Kushayriyyah*, 92.

716 "*Ḥ*āl", *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 5:627.

717 Al-Qushayrī, *Al-Risālah al-Kushayriyyah*, 92; Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1914), 29.

718 Quoted in Ali Hassan Abdel-Kader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd: A Study of a Third/Ninth Century Mystic with an Edition and Translation of His Writings* (London: Luzac, 1962), 81.

719 Desmond, *A Study in Comparative Mysticism*, 58.

720 Ali Abdel-Kader, "'Al-Junayd's Theory of Fanā'," *Islamic Quarterly*, 1(4) (December 1954): 220.

721 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Madārij al-Sālikīn Bayna Manāzil Iyyaka Na'bud wa-Iyyaka Nasta'īn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb 'Arabī, 1972), 1:145-155, 166-167.

722 Nūmsūk, *al-Būdhiyyah*, 496-500; Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 32; Annemarie Schimmel, "Sufism and Islamic Tradition," *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, ed. Steven T. Katz, (Oxford: Oxford University Pres, 1983), 137.

723 Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 157.

724 Quoted in Abdel-Kader, *The Life, Personality and Writings of al-Junayd*, 90; "'Al-Junayd's Theory of Fanā'," 156. See also Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee, *The Circle of Love* (California: The Golden Sufi Center, 1999), 142-145.

725 Vaughan-Lee, *The Circle of Love*, 145-146.

726 Al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma' fi al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. Reynold A. Nicholson (London: Brill, 1914), 433; *The Kitāb al-Luma' fī al-Taṣawwuf*, 119-120.

727 Odo Brooke, "William of St. Thierry's Doctrine of the Ascent to God by Faith", *Studies in Monastic Theology* (Kalamazoo, 1983): 134-207; Bernard McGinn, "Love, Knowledge, and Mystical Union in Western Christianity: Twelfth to Sixteenth Centuries," *Church History*, 56 (1987): 10; Denys Turner, *The Darkness of God: Negativity in Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 144, 159.

728 McGinn, "Love, Knowledge, and Mystical Union in Western Christianity," 11.

729 King, *Christian Mystics*, 67-68.

730 McGinn, "Love, Knowledge, and Mystical Union in Western Christianity," 15-16; Turner, *The Darkness of God*, 137-167.

731 Bernard McGinn (ed.), *Meister Eckhart and Beguine Mystics* (New York: Continuum, 1994), 12.

732 Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam*, 151.

733 From the *Tevigga-Sutta*, in the *Sacred Books of the East* series, vol. 11, 3:8.

734 Ibid., chapter 1, verse 9.

735 G. de Purucker, *The Esoteric Tradition* (Theosophical University Press, Online Edition), Retrieved June 13, 2007, from *http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/et/et-4.htm*.

736 Monier-William, *Buddhism*, 141-142, 235.

737 For an extensive discussion about the distinction between Nirvāna and *al-Fanā'* see Masitoh Ahmad, "*Ma'ālim al-Tajribah al-Rūḥiyyah bayna al-Būdhiyyah wa-al-Islām: Dirāsah Muqāranah*," Unpublished Ph D Thesis (Kuala Lumpur; International Islamic University Malaysia, 2007), 189-193, 212-217, 221.

738 For more on Islamic perspective of the existence of evil amidst God's creation, see Abdul Kabir Hussain Solihu, "Making Sense of Natural Disasters: An Islamic Hermeneutics of Malevolent Phenomena in Nature and Its Implication for Sustainable Development," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, 24.1 (Winter 2007): 63-65.

739 Al-Qushayrī, *al-Risālah al-Kushayriyyah*, 138-142; Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, n.d.), 2:226-236.

740 Gimello, "Mysticism in its Contexts," 63.

Index

A

'Abd Allāh Jawādī Āmulī: 26
'Abd al-Qādir al-Jazā'irī: 20
'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī: 19, 25, 72, 119
'Ali: 16, 37, 64-78, 251, 263, 310, 319
'Alim: 169
'Allamah Tabataba'i: 170, 367
'Aql-e fa'al: 260
'Aql-e kull: 259
'Arif: 27, 28, 39-55, 71, 82, 163, 166, 243, 247
'Ashiq: 55, 247
'Attar: 26, 59, 252, 262
'Azīz al-Dīn Nasafī: 19, 24
Abd al-Latif al-'Abassi: 256
Abdulbaqi Golpinarli: 257
Abū Madyan: 19, 183, 184, 190
Abu Nasr al-Sarraj: 59, 175, 310
Abu Yazīd Bastami: 176, 177
Adam: 99, 111, 186, 188, 225, 320
Afghanistan: 22, 259
Aflaki: 243, 264
Afzal Iqbal: 255, 263
Ahadith: 175, 253
al-'Alawī: 20
Al-'ārif: 173, 174
Alavi: 243, 263
Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah: 17, 346
Al-Haqq: 117, 176, 177
ālim: 169, 174-79
Al-Jīlī: 21, 358
Al-Junayd: 64, 173, 187, 312, 347, 378, 381, 383
Al-Qushayrī: 120, 187, 310
Al-Shādhilī: 19, 20
Amir Musa: 243
Anā'l-haqq: 177
Anada Coomaraswamy: 263
Anatolia: 19, 246, 249
'Aql: 30, 94, 102-04, 212, 258-262
Arberry: 255, 263, 342
'ārif: 27,28, 39-45, 51-55, 71, 82, 163-66, 243, 247
Ascetic worship: 179
Ash'arites: 196
Asrar Name: 262
Attar: 26, 59, 78, 181, 252, 260, 262, 323, 342, 369
Awliya: 23, 117, 342, 356, 366, 380, 381
Ayatollah Khomeini: 21, 28-30, 34, 358, 360, 361

B

Badi' al-Zaman Foruzanfar: 256
Baghdad: 196-99, 243, 347, 350, 352, 365, 366, 380

Baha al-Din: 73, 151, 343, 352
Baha al-Din Walad: 243-45
Balance: 121, 218, 268, 298,
Baqā': 40, 46, 176, 184, 189, 236, 321, 384,
Beloved: 11-12, 37-39, 46, 50, 55, 56, 58, 59, 82, 89, 90, 92, 93, 97, 98, 106-16, 138, 182, 245, 248, 260, 268, 272, 275, 279, 280, 282-84, 314, 319, 321, 323, 391
Bezels of Wisdom: 17, 377, 382,
Bu al-Fazl mosque: 250
Burhan al-Din 245, 250, 258
Burhan al-Din Muhaqqiq: 244, 245, 250, 258

C

Central Asian Schools: 26
Changi Yusof Dede: 257
Chittick, William: 255, 264, 269, 273, 323, 342-43, 346, 355-59, 361-63, 371-74, 380, 381, 384, 385, 388-93, 397
China: 18, 22, 24, 359
City: 37, 55, 80, 214, 219, 220, 262
City of knowledge: 65

D

Damascus: 18, 20, 198, 243, 246, 349, 356, 358, 374, 384
Dhawq: 30, 103, 186, 252, 391
Dhikr: 70, 180, 309, 313
Dhikr Allāh: 180, 244, 309
Dhū'l-Nūn: 176-78, 181, 183, 185, 188, 190, 379, 381, 382
Divan Shams: 247, 255
Divan-e Kabir: 251, 257
Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi: 251, 255
Divine Ipseity or *Dhāt*: 30, 121, 171, 304
Divine Love: 38, 55, 99, 108, 109, 112-14, 116, 275, 307, 383
Divine Names: 31, 99, 119, 120, 174, 176, 242
Divine Order: 31, 207, 226
Doctrinal Sufism: 11, 15-17, 20, 30, 34, 355

E

E.G. Browne: 263, 299, 386, 396
Erich Fromm: 263, 287
Erkan Turkmen: 255, 264
Erzincan: 243, 261
Eye of the heart: 207, 352, 382

F

Face: 37, 39-41, 43, 46, 51, 58, 77, 81, 88, 146, 179, 184, 186, 189, 191, 236, 260, 277, 289, 290, 308, 384, 392
Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī: 18, 24
Fakhr al-Din Bahramshah: 243
Fakhr-i Razi: 156, 157, 170
Fakhri-Nameh: 261
Fanā: 40, 46, 59, 176, 184, 186, 187, 189, 247, 300, 310, 312-15, 318, 321, 384, 398, 399
Fasting: 40, 245
Fatimah Khatun: 250
Fih-e ma Fih: 251, 254-56, 351
Firdawsi: 259, 357
Forgetfulness: 43, 180, 181
Foruzanfar: 256, 264
French: 34, 207, 254, 263, 287, 343, 352, 356, 358, 361, 365, 384, 390
Friend: 56, 57, 65, 67, 95, 102, 103, 110, 114, 246, 258, 360, 381
Frithjof Schuon: 30, 34, 323, 352, 355, 361, 366
Fusus al-hikam: 17, 188, 349, 375, 377

G

Gate: 55, 65, 86
German: 254, 263
Ghafla: 181
Ghazal: 247, 370
Gnostic (*'irfānī*): 11, 17, 18, 21, 22, 25-29, 31, 67, 69, 71, 73, 74, 81, 82, 113, 178, 186, 187, 191, 228, 243, 245, 247, 256, 259, 287, 356, 360, 361, 367, 378, 392
Gnosticism: 5, 75, 369, 378
Golpinarli: 257, 264
Gowharin: 256
Greek: 164, 201, 209, 245, 250, 268, 305, 390
Gulshan-i rāz: 19, 25

H

Hadith: 28, 65-67, 130, 174, 175, 181, 186, 188, 191, 253, 256, 259, 321, 346, 349, 366,
Hadīth qudsī: 175, 186, 191, 321, 346
Haeri, Hadi: 256
Haft Paykar: 261
Hakīm al-Tirmidhī: 16, 17, 66, 179, 182, 345, 355, 356, 366, 382, 383
Hal: 69, 175, 176, 183, 310, 312
Hamadānī: 16, 17, 22, 127, 144, 151, 343, 346-48, 353, 373
Hans Meinke: 254, 263
Haqiqat: 68, 159, 164, 253, 256, 320, 321, 367
Harith al-Muhasibī: 180, 183, 310, 321, 352
Hātif Isfahānī: 192
Hayra: 178
Heart: 16, 30, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 41-56, 58, 60, 85, 87-98, 102, 103, 107, 109, 113, 119-21, 133, 138, 160, 163, 166, 173, 176, 182, 183, 186, 207, 209, 211, 215, 219, 220, 229, 232, 237, 238, 247, 283, 285, 287, 290-93, 295, 299, 310-12, 315, 320, 321, 346, 352, 353, 362, 372, 380, 382-84, 387, 389, 392
Heartfelt: 164
Hegel: 263, 296,
Hikmat: 23, 27, 33, 154, 165, 259, 377
Homaei: 256, 264
Hujwīrī: 175, 176, 182, 346, 378, 379
Husam al-Din Chalabi: 250, 251

I

Ibn 'Arabi: 15-23, 25-30, 32, 34, 68, 71, 72, 74, 120, 122, 165, 237, 323, 342-44, 346, 347, 349, 355-58, 360, 366-68, 372, 377, 378, 388, 390, 394
Ibn 'Atā'illāh al-Iskandarī: 20,180
Ibn Bazzaz: 365
Ibn Sina: 127, 149, 155, 156, 171, 360, 375, 376, 378
Ibn Turkah: 25-27, 72, 359
Ibrahim al-Dasuqi Shita: 257
Ilahi-Nameh: 261, 262
'ilm: 11, 15, 31, 41, 87, 94, 101, 122, 123, 136, 153, 165, 167, 169, 173-75, 177, 178, 199, 200, 262, 345, 357, 379, 380
Imam: 17, 25, 26, 42, 44, 48, 51, 54, 64-66, 68-72, 74-79, 101, 103, 156, 157, 165, 170, 176, 196, 203, 224-26, 253, 263, 310, 319, 320, 323, 342, 345, 358, 360, 361, 365-67, 369, 375, 386
Imam Rida: 70
India: 21-23, 74, 256, 300, 351, 358, 367, 396
Inner: 27, 131, 132, 142, 229, 342, 345, 352, 363, 385
Insan-e Kamil: 253

Intellect: 107, 140, 145, 223,258, 259, 260, 319, 320, 380
Intelligence: 258
Intimations: 244
Iran: 6, 12, 72, 80-82, 105, 121, 127, 144, 151, 163, 243, 256, 261, 262, 347, 348, 369, 389,
'irfan-i nazari: 15
Isfahan: 27, 255, 349, 370, 374
Iskandar Namah: 261
Ismati Khatun: 243
Istanbul: 249, 255, 257, 344, 345

J

Ja'fari: 264
Ja'far Sadiq: 78
Jah: 249
Jami: 18, 19, 22, 24-26, 71, 120, 252, 263
Jāmi' al-asrār: 71, 344
Javad Shariat: 277, 256
Jawahir al-Asrar: 263, 374
Joseph: 252, 254, 343, 350, 359

K

Kamal Al-Din Husayn Khawrazmi: 255
Karāmāt: 179
Karim Zamani: 256
Kayseri: 245, 250, 358
Khalifa: 250
Khalwat: 245
khānqāh or *zāwiyah*: 16, 259
Khidr: 74, 368, 369
Khirqah: 64
Khorasan: 262
Khusraw and Shirin: 261
Khwaja 'Abdall;h Ansari: 365
Khwaje Ayyub: 256
Kitāb al-Luma: 175, 310, 379, 397, 398
Konya: 21, 243-246, 248, 249, 250, 255, 264, 353, 369

L

Layly and Majnun: 261
Lion: 42
Love: 6, 7, 38, 55, 56, 58, 106-109, 111, 112, 115, 116, 135, 138, 247, 255, 263, 264, 267, 269, 271-77, 279, 280, 281, 293, 297, 306, 307, 321, 343, 345, 353, 357, 371, 391, 393, 394, 398, 399
Lover: 11, 38, 39, 55, 56, 58, 86, 108, 111-14, 116, 138, 247, 255, 272, 275, 277, 279, 280, 281, 283, 314, 391-93
Lover of Allah: 56

M

Muwahid M.A: 249
Gupar, M.G: 255
ma'rifah: 387, 399
Ma'arif: 244, 364
Macrocosm: 11, 31, 214-17, 230, 388,
Mahdi: 67, 68, 366
Majales-e Sab'a: 251
Makhāfa: 179,
Makhzan al-Asrar: 261
Maktubat: 17, 251, 254
Malāmatiyya: 182, 352
Malatya: 243
Malikah Khatun: 244
Manazil al-sa'irin: 59, 365
Manaqib al-Arefin: 243, 244
Mantiq at-Tayr: 262,
Maqalat Shams: 246
Maqalat-e Shams-e Tabrizi: 249
Ma'rifah: 17, 34, 200
Ma'rifat: 86, 118, 136, 148, 151-53, 380
Mathnawi: 41, 55, 58, 244, 245, 249, 251-64, 320, 350, 351, 378, 384, 385

Mathnawi Ma'nawi: 251
Muzaffar al-Din Amir: 244
'Alim Chalabi: 244
Maulana: 243-55, 257-62, 264, 345, 353
Mawāqif: 20, 178, 382, 384
Mawla: 357, 359
Mawlawi: 55, 128, 129
Me & Rumi: 246, 264
Measure: 142, 158, 174, 180, 183, 185, 190, 224, 225, 250
Meister Eckhart: 164, 263, 385, 399
Metacosmic Reality: 31
Misbah al-uns: 18, 21, 28
Misbah al-hidayah: 28
Microcosm: 11, 31, 215, 216, 217
Mīrzā Hāshim Ashkiwarī Rashtī: 28
Mohammad 'Abd al-Salam Kafafi: 257
Mohammad b. Nezam al-Din Bahr *al-'Ulum*: 32, 256
Mohammad Baqer Khwansari: 263
Mohammad Este'lami: 256
Mohammad Javad Shariat: 256
Mohammad Mokri: 255
Mohammad Saleh Qazwini: 256
Rowghani: 256
Mohit Tabataei: 256
Moses: 44, 89, 176,
Mostafa Borujerdi: 256
Mu'minah Khatun: 243
Mu'tazilites: 156, 201, 209,
Mudaris Razavi: 259
Muhammad 'Alī Shāhābādī: 28, 30, 34
Muhammad: 16, 17, 20, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 34, 67-69, 72-74, 88, 99, 105, 109, 110, 111, 114, 115, 118, 144, 196, 210, 224-26, 237, 239, 240, 245, 246, 255, 256, 259, 264, 310, 317, 345, 347, 348, 350-53, 359, 366, 367, 369, 375, 381, 384, 389, 390
Muhammad ibn Mansur Sarakhsi: 259,
Muhammad Taqi Jaffari: 256
Muhāsaba: 180
Mullah Hadi Subsawari: 256
Murtada: 70
Musa Nasri: 256
Musibat Nameh: 262
Muwahid: 249
Muzaffar al-Din Amir 'Alim Chalabi: 244

N

nafs-i mutma'innah: 38
Nahja al-Balaqheh: 263
Najm al-Dīn Kubrā: 26, 243
Nasr, Seyyed Hossein: 12, 15, 256, 356, 358, 370, 372, 376, 389
Nazam al Din Mahmud Shirazi: 256
Nicholson: 254, 255, 257, 260, 263, 314, 323, 343, 346, 349, 351, 358, 363, 365, 370, 371, 378-80, 382, 384, 385, 397-99
Niffarī: 178, 350, 352, 382, 384
Nishapour: 262
Nizami: 261
Nizami Ganjawi: 261

O

Oneness: 11, 31, 49, 59, 148, 155, 169, 174, 184, 185, 187, 200, 232, 236, 276, 277, 313, 315, 316
Orientalists: 63, 79, 80, 81, 299, 367
Origen: 305
Ottoman: 21, 22, 72, 73, 357, 358
Overwhelming: 54, 307, 310, 314

P

Path of love: 55, 113, 247, 255, 264, 321, 343, 371
Pazouki: 12, 163
Perfect man: 11, 12, 39, 68, 122, 159,

212, 253, 258, 263, 279
Persia: 15, 18, 21-27, 29, 71-74, 243, 263, 348, 357, 359, 360, 361, 368
Persian: 15, 18, 19, 21-27, 29, 65, 72-74, 85, 95, 145, 163, 165, 248, 252, 255-57, 259, 260, 262, 263, 323, 344-47, 349, 350, 368-71, 377, 380-83
Persian Sufi poetry: 25, 29,
Philosopher: 22, 26, 45, 105, 117, 123, 154, 163, 164, 212, 214, 231, 240, 256, 280, 371
Pir: 79, 103, 369, 389
Pourjavadi: 256, *350*
Pournamdarian: 256
Practical Sufism: 12, 15, 20
Presence (hudūr): 30, 181, 184
Pride: 56, 259
Prophet: 16, 41, 44, 48-53, 56, 57, 64-72, 76-78, 80, 85, 89, 90, 99, 101-103, 109, 110, 114, 123, 160, 161, 166, 171, 174, 175, 191, 203, 210-212, 225, 245, 246, 251-53, 261, 269, 310, 317, 319-21, 345, 369, 370, 379, 394
Pure spirit: 345, 350

Q

Qalb: 119, 176, 345, 380, 382, 392
Qushayri: 58, 127, 187, 196, 310, 350, 373, 379, 380, 398, 399
Qūnawī: 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 27, 34, 323, 357, 378, 398
Qur'ān: 37, 42, 46, 53, 55-57, 75, 81, 87, 88, 90, 94-96, 163, 181, 203, 204, 206, 207, 210, 212, 218, 221, 230, 235, 237, 238, 241, 244-46, 252, 253, 256, 259, 261, 263, 320, 343, 345, 349, 350, 369, 381, 390
Qutb: 68, 245, 258, 369

R

Reality: 5, 30, 31, 85, 92, 131, 132, 159, 176, 177, 184-86, 189, 190, 192, 217, 219, 220, 232, 235-37, 239, 241, 251, 259, 293, 295, 305, 308, 318, 349,
Redhouse: 255
Reza Qoli Khan Hedayat: 256
Rosukhi Esmaeil Anqarawi: 257
Rowzat al-Jannat: 263
Rubaya't: 247
Rum: 246
Rumi: 12, 26, 32, 41, 55-57, 77, 91, 95, 102, 165, 243, 245, 246, 251, 252, 254-57, 262-64, 320, 323, 342-44, 346, 349-52, 370, 378, 382, 384

S

Sabzewari: 351,
Sad Maydan: 347
Safavi, Seyed G: 351
Safavid period: 22, 26, 72, 265, 165, 360
Safat al-Safa: 55
sahw: 184
Saint: 21, 27, 34, 65, 123, 246, 258, 306, 315, 347, 350-52, 357, 361, 369, 379, 382, 385
Salah al-Din Fereidun Zarkub: 250
Salik: 39, 47, 49, 50, 55, 60, 164, 168
Saljuq Khatun: 243
Sama': 246
Sana'i: 344
Sanaei: 252, 259-62, 323
Sarakhs: 259, 260
Sawm: 245
Sayda: 257
Sayyār: 180
Sayyid 'Alī Hamadānī: 22

Sayyid Haydar Āmulī: 30, 68, 71, 72, 144, 366,
Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i: 367
Schimmel: 254, 264, 323, 343, 345, 351, 356, 362, 363, 365, 371, 373, 381, 398,
School of Isfahan: 349
School of Khurasan: 26
Science of spirit: 31
Seal of Persian Poets: 26
Seclusion: 47-49, 79, 198, 209, 219, 245, 249, 314, 322
Self-examination: 180
Seljuk: 197, 243, 244
Seyyed Burhan al-Din Muhaqqiq: 244
Seyed Mohammad Kazem 'Assar: 256
Seyyed Burhan al-Din Muhaqqiq: 244
Termazi: 244
Shabistarī: 18, 22, 25, 38, 45, 59, 323, 362
Shādhilism: 20
Shāh Ni'mat Allāh Walī: 22, 25, 72, 368
Shah Vali Allah: 23, 358
Shahidi: 256
Shams: 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 55, 120, 245-51, 253-56, 258, 342, 350,
Shams al-Dīn Fanārī: 18, 21
Shams al-Dīn Maghribī: 18
Shams al-Din Tabrizi: 245, 249
Shaykh: 20, 23, 26, 49, 55, 73, 78, 94, 97, 106, 156, 157, 187, 250, 342, 347, 352, 365, 368-70, 390
Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi: 23
Shaykh al-Ishraq: 347, 352
Sheykh Najm al-Din Kubra: 243
Shi'ite: 16, 22, 25, 26, 28, 64-77, 344, 366, 367, 381
Shi'ite Imams: 64, 70, 72, 366
Shiism: 5, 12, 351
Shi'ism: 5, 25, 26, 63-79, 81, 367, 368
Simorgh: 262,
Sobriety: 184, 314, 315
Sorush: 256
Southeast Asia: 22, 23
Spiritual successor: 319
Sri Lanka: 263
Structure: 15, 27, 64, 69, 71, 219, 242, 255, 264, 289, 301, 322, 351, 368, 382,
Sufi: 6, 7, 16-20, 22, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, 44, 56, 64-66, 68-78, 80, 85, 102, 106, 118-20, 122, 151, 152, 154, 160, 163-65, 167, 171-75, 178, 179, 185, 195, 209-11, 238, 243, 247, 251-53, 255, 257-59, 261-64, 300, 309-13, 315, 318, 322, 342-45, 347-50, 352, 353, 355-59, 361-65, 367-69, 371-73, 379-85, 388, 390, 391, 395, 397, 398
Sufi orders: 26, 65, 70-74, 353, 366, 368
Sufi path: 19, 163, 247, 255, 264, 343, 344, 346, 356, 362, 363, 371, 373 380, 384, 385, 388, 390, 391
Suhrawardi: 32, 52, 323, 343, 347, 348, 352, 353
sukr, drunkenness: 50, 55, 184, 248, 312, 313
Sultan Walad: 244, 249, 250
Supreme Essence: 31
Supreme Principle: 30
Supreme Science (al-'ilm al-a'lâ): 15-18, 30, 31, 34, 361
Surah: 37, 252, 374
Syria: 19, 21, 198, 199, 245, 249, 250, 305

T

Tabriz: 245, 246, 248-51, 253, 255, 256, 347, 350
Tahayyur: 178

Tāj al-Dīn Khwārazmī: 25
Tamhīd al-qawā'id: 26, 27, 29, 130
Tamhīdāt: 17, 130
Tanzīh: 192
Tasawwuf: 11, 15, 73, 78, 173, 176, 365, 366
taste (*dhawq*): 30, 103, 186, 252, 391
*tawh*id: 174, 180, 185, 187, 236, 262, 315, 319, 323
tayyār: 180
Tazkerat al-Ulia: 262
Titus Burckhardt: 34, 323, 357, 358
Toshihiko Izutso: 257
Truth: 31, 40-42, 88, 90, 91, 98, 117-23, 132, 135-38, 142, 145, 148, 154, 157-159, 162, 166, 168, 177, 187, 197, 224, 289, 315, 362, 373, 381, 383, 385
Turkey: 18, 21, 22, 33, 243, 257, 259
Turkish: 18, 21-23, 250, 257, 357
Turkmen: 255, 264

U

Unification 11, 39, 97, 172, 306
Universal Intelligence 160

V

Vali Mohammad Akbar Abadi 256
vigilance (*yaqza*) 11, 39, 47, 50, 181
Vision of God 312

W

Walayah 17, 25, 28-30, 77, 79, 355, 369,
Wali 9, 22, 23, 25, 65, 102, 246, 258, 323, 358, 368, 369, 386
Way 40, 137, 147, 307, 308, 352, 383, 396
Wilson 255
Winfield 255
Worship 7, 231, 235, 236, 240, 241, 345
Wujūdiyyah 23

Z

Zubdah 17
Zulaikha 252